

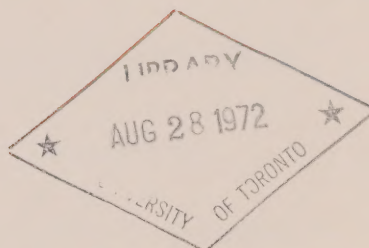


# Gone Today and Here Tomorrow

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GONE TODAY AND HERE TOMORROW:

Issues Surrounding  
the  
Future of Citizen Involvement

prepared for

The Committee on Government Productivity

Ontario, Canada

by

Catherine Starrs and Gail Stewart

The Public Policy Concern

Ottawa

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## Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Preface	1
Introduction	3
Section I - Something is Happening	8
II - What is Happening? Speculations Around a Theme	15
III - A Knight's Move	47
IV - Policy Implications: Where do we go from here?	48
V - Citizen Involvement: Some Key Questions	53
VI - Communications Policy: Some Key Questions	62
VII - Summary	70
Appendix - Community Information Centres	A1 - A12
Notes	N1 - N16

From the York Centre, Social Change Education  
by George Lloyd Walker and the Staff  
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What's the buzz?

Tell me what's happening?

...What's the buzz?

Tell me what's happening? \*

\* From the rock opera, Jesus Christ Superstar,  
by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice,  
Copyright by Leeds Music Ltd., London, England, 1970.





## Preface

This report is addressed to sub-studies 2 and 5 of the COGP study on the future of citizen involvement. These two sub-studies deal with communications and the relationship of citizens to large organizations respectively. Within the terms of reference of these studies we were asked to comment on such matters as the relationship between citizen involvement and communications, consumerism, the counter-culture, urbanization, rising levels of education, and increased leisure. We have chosen, for reasons which will become apparent, to combine the two sub-studies and report on them in a single document.

The report which follows is perhaps a rather unconventional response to the Committee's request that we investigate and report on these matters in relation to citizen involvement. The report in fact goes well beyond even these very broad terms of reference to raise some basic questions about the way in which we in Ontario have perceived the issue of citizen involvement. It is perhaps best described as an attempt — an essay — to comprehend citizen involvement in the context of the 1970's.

We make no apology for setting the issue of citizen involvement in such a broad context. We believe there is much evidence that "something is happening" in our society and in Western culture generally. To frame the issue in narrower terms would be to risk irrelevancy in short order.

The process of forming judgments is a complex one. The judgments reflected in this paper are based upon but move beyond our own backgrounds in the fields of economics and finance, drawing upon resources of knowledge and imagination from many sources. Many of those from whom we've drawn are known to us only through their writings. (We have made reference to many of these writings in the notes attached to this report.) But there are many closer friends whose contributions to our thinking are too diffuse and ubiquitous for us to have footnoted every one of them. Should any among them happen to read this essay, they will know, perhaps from a turn of phrase here or a cast of argument there, that we are indebted to them.

In a less direct way, we have been encouraged in this and other tasks by the knowledge that there is a growing community of concern and discovery and action around these issues in Canada, and that this community is learning to report its discoveries and to express its concerns more and more coherently. In doing so it is opening the doors to more comprehensive understandings and new hope, perhaps particularly to those of us who toil in the field of public policy.

## Introduction

This essay is an attempt to sketch in broad-brush outline a context or background in which to set a discussion of the future of citizen involvement and to explore some of the possible policy routes which might be appropriate in such a context. For this reason it is highly speculative in nature and is designed to bring stronger light to bear upon what appear to have been some hitherto invisible or only dimly perceived structural elements in our social environment — the assumptions on which our culture has been built.

Most of us have been so absorbed in building and operating and living in the society which has flourished upon these foundations that we have paid the assumptions themselves little attention. But our restless, questioning, inventive society is now turning some of its energy to a more comprehensive examination of its own foundations. The discoveries being made and the understandings being developed are beginning to accumulate to the point where it may not be too risky for us soon to shift away from some current assumptions and to proceed to build more solidly on others. Indeed, the process has already begun.

The characteristics of the society which could emerge from such a shift may even now be dimly perceived. It is a new world with such promise of richness that it is hardly surprising some of those who have become aware of its possibility should speak with excitement



and hope. Many among them have been mocked as dreamers, and indeed they may be, but we suspect their predecessors may have been those who thought the world was round when most were still quite certain it was flat.

But modern explorers are not returning simply with the news that our world has one more dimension than most of us have perceived. They are saying in effect that it has as many dimensions as we choose to endow it with, because we ourselves create its dimensions when we select, consciously or unconsciously, the assumptions on which we build. In saying this they are merely affirming what we seem always to have known inside ourselves but rarely to have acknowledged to each other. And it is just this juxtaposition, this coming together of scientific discovery and the capacity to confirm these discoveries at the personal and community level, which is giving social change in the 1970's such momentum.

This piece is not an attempt to assess these energy-releasing discoveries nor to persuade others to our view of them. It is simply an attempt to sketch an outline of these new perceptions and their manifestations as we see them. The people of Ontario are in our view already deeply involved in this process of exploration and discovery, of shifting perceptions and the development of new understandings. Furthermore, these issues bid fair to become the dominant theme of the decade, as economic growth was the dominant

theme of the 1960's. This essay then is closer to art than to science — it is a questioning, speculative, roughly-brushed-in personal impression of what is going on at the present time and where it all may be leading, and an equally rough exploration of some possible responses which we may wish to make through our institutions of government.

Before turning to discuss what is going on, however, we should probably say something in general about the research method we have used. Rather than zeroing in on the question of citizen involvement, we have moved out and away from it in all directions, trying to establish the context of the phenomenon in very broad terms. This done we have moved in to focus again on the issue itself.

By eschewing an approach which defined and isolated and examined the issue it was primarily concerned with, and by choosing instead to move outwards and see the issue in context, we are clearly running counter to what is regarded as appropriate research technique in much of our society. We are thus likely to be perceived as moving from hard to soft data, from objectivity to subjectivity and, quite possibly, from practicality in application to impracticality. We do not share these perceptions, for reasons that may be inferred by analogy:



"...This, in its primitive form, is the grand scheme that has perpetuated life on the earth: the dependence of one life process on another; the mutual, interconnected development of the earth's life system and the non-living constituents of the environment; the repeated transformation of the materials of life in great cycles, driven by the energy of the sun.... Every living thing is dependent on many others, either indirectly, through the physical and chemical features of the environment, or directly, for food or a sheltering place. Within every living thing on the earth — indeed, within each of its individual cells — is contained another network (as complex, on its own scale, as the environmental system), made up of numerous intricate molecules, elaborately interconnected by chemical reactions, on which the life properties of the whole organism depend.

Unfortunately, we in the scientific community are not well prepared to deal with interconnections of this kind. We have been trained by modern science to think about much simpler events — how one particle bounces off another, or how Molecule A reacts with Molecule B. Confronted by a situation as complex as the environment and its vast array of living inhabitants, we are likely — some more than others — to attempt to reduce it in our minds to a set of separate simple events, in the hope that their sum will somehow represent the whole. This is an illusory hope. For some time now, biologists have studied animals isolated in cages, and biochemists have studied molecules isolated in test tubes, accumulating the vast, detailed literature of modern biological science. Yet these separate data have yielded no sum that explain why the air reeks and the water is foul." 1/

This essay then could be construed as an attempt to sketch some of the preliminary outlines of a more comprehensive "ecological" understanding of the issue of citizen involvement.

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1/ Barry Commoner, The Closing Circle - I, The New Yorker, Sept. 25, 1971.

Uncomfortable and difficult and controversial as such a process may be — "too philosophical" — we believe it is an essential prerequisite to any of us engaging in effective action. In other words, we see it as the only practical approach to any of our current policy issues, particularly when people are beginning to appreciate that complicated social problems do not yield to mechanical definitions or solutions, no matter how well intentioned — indeed may even be aggravated by them.

## I. Something is Happening

A large and growing number of people are now seriously engaged in the process of exploring the fundamental assumptions by which we live our daily lives and on which our society is built. Their numbers cannot be counted nor even guessed at since many among them are raising their questions in the course of private conversations. But others are rising to speak publically or are writing in such volume as would engulf any who tried to keep up with such public expressions. Their example is fostering the process of examining and understanding the world around us.

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"...I think, furthermore, that humanity is in a serious crisis that results essentially from our values and philosophy. Our policies are just expressions of these values."

David E. Woodsworth, Director of the School of Social Work, McGill University, "Social Policies for Tomorrow", an address given to The Canadian Council on Social Development Forum on Social Policies, Sept. 22, 1971.

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"...You see, even the qualified homogeneity that provided our main illusions of "reality" as recently as the 1950's has begun to break up. In the face of wave upon wave of data, demand, and decision during the last twenty years, humans have been fragmented

to a distressing degree. There has been the fragmentation of training and conditioning — creating a communal layer cake of age and occupational divisions that are often quite unintelligible to one another. There has been the fragmentation of experience — widening gulfs between those who have supped at vanished fountains and those who are allowed only to imagine their former existence. And, perhaps most important of all, there has been the fragmentation of pace and style — some among us treading to a measured, linear beat with finite forms while others take beats as they come, formless and unpredictable."

Donald R. Gordon, The New Literacy, University of Toronto Press, Toronto and Buffalo, 1971.

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"In the area of the environment, immediate survival is at stake for certain wild creatures and plant life. Man's ultimate survival is at stake as he realizes that the earth is a closed system. ...Environmental responsibility is a way of life, an attitude toward our habitat, an ever-present awareness of the interrelationship and interdependence of all living things on this earth.

With this sober awakening has come the joyousness of a morning. Values that were forgotten... are returning to enrich the individual and shift the world back into balance.

This awakening brings an awareness that the individual cannot live without his neighbor. Life styles of consumption and extravagance must change, and the individual can no longer remain isolated. His personal decisions affect his neighbor. His neighbor's decisions affect him.

The individual, who has appeared to be becoming more and more impotent in a vast society, is now discovering that he alone is the key to change, to survival, to the improvement of life for all humanity.

To accomplish a worldwide change of values, so that our resources are not squandered and our surroundings destroyed, challenges the imagination of all the people on earth."

Walter J. Hickel, former Secretary of the Interior and Governor of Alaska, Saturday Review, Oct. 2, 1971.

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"...In 1966 the Duff-Berdahl report, University Government in Canada, devoted two and a half of its one hundred pages to the role of students in the governance of universities. A year, even six months later, the student role would unquestionably have received ten times as much attention. This is a reminder of how recent is the emergence of the student power movement as a potent factor in the educational affairs of the province. It is also a reminder of how great the differences are between the situation five years ago and today.

...The students of the future are here already, but we have been slow to recognize them. We have been calling them a minority, but they are a vanguard.

...The students of the future are far more mature and knowledgeable than those of the past, ...they will learn by recognizing patterns and taking in many things simultaneously, ...will be more politically adroit, ...will seek more direct experience, ...will be impatient with our habitual compartmentalization of man's capacities.... Already many of them have an understanding of the reunited personality.... Their consciousness has changed. Their perceptions are different. Their way of handling experience is different. This has happened quickly, but not overnight — some observers, notably Marshall McLuhan, have been trying for more than a decade to make people understand the extent and completeness of the change....

The students of the future will demand of post-secondary education a return to a vision of man as a whole."

Porter, Blishen, et al., Towards 2000, The Future of Post-Secondary Education in Ontario. From the Report prepared for the Committee of Presidents of Universities of Ontario by its Subcommittee on Research and Planning, McClelland and Stewart, Toronto, 1971.



"...All of these disparate manifestations tell us that great change is moving restlessly, and sometimes violently and urgently, not only through our own country, but literally throughout the whole world. The manifestations are found in the rich nations of the West and in the Third World, Something very profound is going on."

William A. Dyson, Chairman of the National Council of Welfare and former member of the Quebec Enquiry into Health and Social Welfare (Castonguay-Nepveu Commission), Speech for the Conference on Social Services Manpower, Ville D, Esterel, Quebec, February 21, 1971.

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"...The future is not for profits, it is not for machines, it is not for systems and computers, it is not for technocrats — it is for people."

The Honourable William Davis, Remarks to the Progressive Conservative Party Dinner, Sudbury, June 22, 1971.

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"...there is rapidly developing a new image of society and of all its institutions."

Abraham H. Maslow, Foreword to Frank Goble, The Third Force, Simon and Schuster, Richmond Hill, 1971.

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"At rare intervals, centuries apart, ...the whole course of human thought and behaviour is suddenly diverted into new channels...."

Why, the reader may well ask, should an historical notion so obvious in retrospect, and apparently so irrelevant to the hard problems of our time, be introduced into a brief, layman's report from Washington? Because the United States, right now, has entered upon one of history's basic shifts."

Bruce Hutchison, "Crisis Lacks Agreement on Fundamentals", Ottawa Journal, November 9, 1970.

"We are so far behind having any real understanding that most of the social welfare proposals put forward in the last 50 years have made the problems worse. I think the evidence of this is pretty overwhelming."

David Leighton, Director, Banff School of Fine Arts and first chairman of the Canadian Consumer Council, in an interview with Paul Gibson of the Financial Post, September 18, 1971.

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"Almost all thoughtful observers now recognize that what we have been witnessing on campus since the Berkeley uprising of 1964 is the leading edge of a massive pattern of social change that has gone on to envelop not just Western society but indeed all the technologically advanced countries. This year, our students are no longer displaying the diffuse anger at the world around them which marked earlier stages of disorder. Instead, the campus is witnessing the growth of a new and powerful variety of narrowly defined "liberation movements" which provide a new system of tensions. They will affect us immediately, and we may safely suggest that they will probably affect society at large within two or three years' time."

William J. McGill, President of Columbia University, "Guest Privilege: The New Tensions on Campus", Life Magazine, October 8, 1971.

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" We will examine the present state of North American society, where quite clearly something has gone awry with many relationships.... The litany of our public problems is getting longer.... There is a dawning realization that more of the same policies, more patchwork, more tinkering will not bring us out of our present crisis state.... Notice that these analyses all point to the technical-economic system which dominates North American culture: the clockwork world for which all of us labour to produce and consume, the mega-machine which imposes its methods and values on every institution - - government, school, and church as well as the industrial complex.

This clockwork system - - followed in varied ways by capitalist, socialist, and communist states alike - - regards goods, events and people as time-space units, as measurable quantities to be managed and controlled in the common service of ever more production, more consumption; and, it turns out, more pollution.

...Many are questioning the values which undergird this clockwork system. People are beginning to suspect that the mega-machine has an impoverishing social ethic; that it fashions technical giants and spiritual pygmies.

...We need to examine our root assumptions and premises, the way we see and understand nature, social organizations, ourselves.

...Reality is never fixed.... In the industrialized society to which we belong the predominant view of reality was shaped by cultural forces reaching back to Southern and Northern Europe. This prevailing world-view is characterized by abstract reasoning, by technique, and by moral concepts (such as the work ethic) which together produced the scientific method, modern technology, and our major political-social structures.

No need to proclaim the many benefits our technical world view has yielded. Today we are concerned with its shortcomings.... Some inadequacies and limitations are becoming apparent:

...It sees reality in bits and pieces, as parts separated from one another rather than interrelated.

...(It) also sees men as parts of economic systems and political ideologies.

...In response to specific problems, policies tend to be devised piecemeal...a comprehensive view of human well-being is lacking.

...We have to find some way of putting industrialized man back together again - - reuniting mind and body, reason and feelings, and his public and private lives. If we are hard pressed enough (and it's coming to that), if we want to badly enough, we'll find a way.

We'll find a way to step from our present mentality  
"through the looking glass" into a mindscape with  
broader horizons.

...This is not fanciful day-dreaming. The  
genesis of a new consciousness is already in process."

The Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, "It is Time to Humanize Technology", remarks before the Fourth Annual Executive Institute, The University of North Carolina, February 15, 1971.

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## II. What is Happening? Speculations Around a Theme\*

Something indeed is happening. Exactly what is going on is not clear, although so many people have hazarded a guess as to its nature that there is veritably a futures market in futures.<sup>1/</sup> This section sketches the outlines of our own best guess about what is happening and about the way in which it is related to decision-making in general; in later sections we discuss its relation to citizen involvement.

A process of questioning has begun, its arrival clearly hastened by a growing recognition of strains in the old order: Vietnam, oil spills, inflation and unemployment combined, population explosion and civil disorder among them. It has probably been furthered as well by the juxtaposition of our own culture against others in the same time and space which has been made possible through electronic communications. These influences are helping us to see ourselves more clearly, and are revealing to us some of the dominant characteristics of our own society which most of us have accepted implicitly and which few among us have ever questioned. A society based on some highly specialized, fragmented and contradictory understandings is being exposed.<sup>2/</sup>

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\* In this and following sections, the reader will find references to the notes appended to this essay. The text can be read without referring to these notes, which draw attention to selected authors or comment further on the arguments presented here.



Our hypothesis is that we are gradually moving away from this set of specialized and fragmented understandings about man, inconsistent among themselves, towards more comprehensive and "person-centred" understandings with potentially fewer inconsistencies. In other words, we are beginning to move, or so it appears to us, towards the reunification of persons in reunified communities. This theme is itself too comprehensive to be subject to proof in the usual sense and we can only document it impressionistically. As an image or pattern against which it is possible to interpret and "make sense of" what is happening in our society today we find it helpful.

The processes of decision-making in any society are related to its basic understandings of the nature of man and the way human well-being is best served. That is to say, our basic understandings of ourselves and of what contributes to our well-being tend to determine how we select and interpret information and how we then make our personal and institutional decisions. Thus criteria flowing from our basic understandings about our well-being and how it may be enhanced will direct our judgments and decisions. These criteria are the explicit or implicit standards against which we measure our "effectiveness", our "productivity", our "morality", our "progress".

At the present time it appears to us that criteria flowing from more comprehensive understandings than prevailed in the past

are infusing decision-making processes in every sphere of activity in our society — from governments to businesses, from schools to families, from research institutions to churches. Citizen involvement is one of a number of issues which have been thrown into prominence by this expansion in our basic understandings and the related changes in our decision-making processes.

### Basic Understandings

It is neither easy nor painless for a society to come to grips with its own basic understandings — to stand aside from them and see them clearly and to assess their suitability to its circumstances. It is only recently that our own society has begun to address itself to such questions, and the process promises to be a long and difficult and often painful one.

For our part, our own understandings were greatly facilitated by the imagery of Lewis Mumford, who spoke of the "mega-machine", the vast producing machinery of society that spans virtually the entire globe. Its very size and the fact that many of its parts are human beings has hitherto contributed to its invisibility. The "mega-machine" society perceives its central problem as scarcity, and is organized to produce output so as to overcome scarcity.

Underlying this organization pattern is an assumption that the needs of man are hierarchical and sequential, with material needs primary and predominant followed by psychological and social needs.<sup>3/</sup> Hence his images as a producer and a consumer tend to take precedence over his other roles. This ranking of needs and roles also penetrates deeply into family decision-making, even after the material needs of the family are abundantly met. What is thought to be true for the individual is then simply aggregated to the societal level. Economic development and growth is taken to be the primary national goal, and participation in the labour force becomes the most significant form of activity in the society. Internationally, countries are ranked along a scale from "developed" to "undeveloped" and this forms their predominant image.

Furthermore, economic policy has first place among all public policies because it deals most directly with material scarcity. Issues of "quantity" supersede and may even be thought of as separable from those of "quality". At both national and international levels, economic policy holds sway over social policy, the former being concerned with income distribution to secure increasing output and the latter with income redistribution in such a way as not to reduce output. And territorially exclusive nation-states are themselves institutional embodiments of the mega-machine society.

In order to increase output from this enormous production machine, we have developed specialization of function to a high degree. Firmly focussing our eyes on the importance of the efficiency of the machine, and of our role in relation to it, we have bent the structure and functions of other systems — nation-states, schools, hospitals, churches — to its service. This increasing specialization, and the fragmentation of persons and personal responsibility which inevitably accompany it<sup>4/</sup>, appear to have occurred under the influence of Aristotelian logic and positive science, techniques of understanding with which the Western world has become so fascinated.

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"'Once the rockets are up  
Who cares where they come down?  
That's not my department'  
Says Wernher von Braun". 5/

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Our view of man is very curious too:

" As soon as we begin to look at this, we see how curiously limited is the vision of human excellence that has got built into our society and that we have made do with up to now. It is a vision that is inextricably linked with the market society. And the sad truth is that it is a vision of inertia. It is almost incredible,



until you come to think of it, that a society whose keyword is enterprise, which certainly sounds active, is in fact based on the assumption that human beings are so inert, so averse to activity, that is, to expenditure of energy, that every expenditure of energy is considered to be painful, to be, in the economist's term, a disutility. This assumption, which is a travesty of the human condition, is built right into the justifying theory of the market society, and so of the liberal society. The market society, and so the liberal society, is commonly justified on the grounds that it maximizes utilities, i.e., that it is the arrangement by which people can get the satisfaction they want with the least effort. The notion that activity itself is pleasurable, is a utility, has sunk almost without a trace under this utilitarian vision of life. This is not surprising, since the economists, and the liberal theoreticians following them, have taken as given the capitalist market society where no one works except for a reward. To see the hollowness of this vision, one need only ask what we shall all do when automation, cybernation, and new sources of non-human energy, have made the system of working for material rewards quite out-of-date and useless. What then shall we do except expend our energy in truly human activities — laughing, playing, loving, learning, creating, arranging our lives in ways that give us aesthetic and emotional satisfaction?" <sup>6/</sup>

Decisions made on the basis of increasingly narrow and specialized understandings have, until very recently, been quite characteristic of almost all our institutions. These understandings are obtained when some elements in a situation are deliberately set aside or held constant, when the "reality" that is under consideration is less comprehensive than the reality that even those involved admit to recognizing.<sup>7/</sup> Decisions which flow from such understandings fail to take account of many factors perceived to fall outside the specialized reality being examined, even though many of these same factors are recognized to be related or interconnected with it.



Specialized categories or concepts come to be seen as substantially more inclusive and "real" than they are, rather than being seen as always inadequate to encompass the many facets and interconnections of all that is going on within and around them. Social reality under specialized understandings tends to be reduced to what has been or could be categorized. Furthermore, and this is perhaps the well-spring of many of our current difficulties, the elements that are set aside or held constant gradually and often imperceptibly vanish from our consciousness: our "reality base" shrinks, since the more we take for granted, the less we are able to see. Thus the price of our preoccupation with scientific methods, "objective" knowledge and specialization of function appears to have been paid in the coin of perceptual poverty.

The embodiments, the institutions, of specialized "mega-machine" understandings, like the very air we breathe, are so much around us that we rarely notice them. Specialized assumptions are in the very bones of our buildings and in our understandings of ourselves — our self-images. They are the basis for business corporations and for nation states. They tend for the most part to be "system-centred", focussing upon whatever abstraction, whatever concept, is at their core, and taking account of the relationships which run out from that system only within narrow and mechanically defined limits. Specialized understandings predominate in our systems of justice, of education, of government, and of business, and provide the basis for the prevailing and inadequate measures of their performance.<sup>7A/</sup>

But specialized understandings are even more deeply rooted in our society. We tend to derive our primary identification of ourselves from the role we play in the production machine. We also tend to adopt a whole life style which is appropriate to this role. This is to say that we see ourselves for the most part in the light of what we produce or how we are related to the "mega-machine". "I am a doctor, a businessman, a student, a secretary, a teacher, a civil servant, a politician", or "I am retired."

Our personal life styles are largely molded by this view: we are prepared in school for our roles as producers and consumers, we then take our place as "full members" of society when we enter the labour force and we "retire" from the mainstream when our most productive years are over. Considerations of productivity as it is narrowly understood in the specialized mega-machine understandings have more and more come to dominate where we live, how often we move, who our friends are, how we relate to our children, how our time will be allocated, and what our values are. They also play a predominant role in determining the nature of our relationships with people in other countries and how we "see" them.

The very pervasiveness of these understandings adds to their invisibility — to the common assumption that it is natural that our society should be so organized and that there are no particular value judgments involved. The fact that we and most

of the rest of the world's people, whether in communist or capitalist systems, inhabit what has been called a "clockwork" world is more often regarded as a deplorable but inevitable necessity flowing out of human needs than as a choice we have made. Furthermore, those who do question it have until recently been made to feel uncomfortable and to look for support in the confirming views of others.<sup>8/</sup> This has not prevented its being questioned, but it has inhibited widespread and vigorous discussion.<sup>9/</sup> And people who have stood somewhat outside the system and hence have been in a position to view its workings with some detachment, such as women in their homes, have found it difficult to be heard by those within.<sup>10/</sup>

#### Broader, More Comprehensive Understandings

While specialized understandings have tended to provide the predominant criteria by which decisions are made in our society and hence its predominant organizational patterns, other understandings exist. Not only do they exist but they are used in some instances by each of us to interpret information and to make decisions. These understandings, at once both more comprehensive and person-centred, tend to be focussed less upon production and output than upon process and relationship. Human needs are understood to be not hierarchical and sequential with the same sequence for everyone at all times, but highly idiosyncratic and personal,

human and contextually determined rather than mechanical, categorical and independent of social context. These broader understandings suggest that it is in a whole context of relationships that well-being is nurtured, not merely nor even predominantly through ever-increasing material consumption.

Progress in the terms of this understanding is therefore not predominantly understood as increasing measured output but as moving towards harmonious and mutually enriching relationships.<sup>11/</sup> Thus, its primary focus of achievement tends to lie in some or all forms of relationship —

- relationships in community with others through which we grow in awareness and capacity for experience
- relationships with self through the processes of developing skills and fitness and awareness and knowledge — (including self-knowledge)
- relationships with the environment, whether man-made or natural, which enrich both the environment and the persons and communities concerned.

Material or finite scarcity and the problems which it poses are neither denied nor ignored; rather they are perceived as of secondary rather than primary importance. They are encompassed in or transcended by more extensive concerns and this is the case at any "standard of living" — affluence is not a prerequisite.



These understandings transform many current concepts and change their focus from effects on output to effects on relationship.<sup>12/</sup> Arm's-length and "maximizing" exchange relationships, with their focus on what is exchanged, tend to give way to what have been called "gift"relationships<sup>13/</sup>, "integrative" relationships<sup>14/</sup>, and "shared learning experiences".

This subtle shift in the predominant focus of concern

- from specialized towards more comprehensive and person-centred understandings of human well-being,
- from products to processes which embrace but transcend the question of products,
- from outputs to relationships which embrace but transcend the issue of outputs

has extraordinary implications for the number of viable patterns of social organization, implications that we will return to later. It also transforms many current understandings, e.g., what comprises government productivity, what is the role of the judiciary, etc.<sup>15/</sup>

The predominant image which is accorded to persons in more comprehensive relationships is not defined and circumscribed by their role in the productive system. Rather, it is more inclusive, more whole. This in turn tends to enhance the possibility of people responding imaginatively outside the confines of their customary role behaviour, and in consequence growing in capacity and experience and creativity.



In the language of the economist, more of the "externalities" tend to be internalized -- to be taken into account -- in the decision-making processes which flow out of more comprehensive understandings. Inter-action effects on members of the family or community or on the environment are likely to figure more prominently in both personal and institutional decisions. Sharp distinctions and dichotomies that are common elsewhere tend to be blurred. For example, rather than drawing sharp lines between what is work and what is not work on the basis of society-wide standardized understandings about what constitutes productive behaviour and what doesn't, understandings become more personalized, more accurately defined by persons in community, and the society-wide distinctions come to be perceived as artificial. (Were such perceptions to spread, our capacity as a community truly to focus upon reducing toil would of course become sharpened. Rather than concentrating our attention, as we do now, on the reduction of "high cost" work, we would more clearly perceive "dehumanizing" or meaningless work -- work done in foul environments, excessively repetitive tasks, etc. -- and more actively move towards its reduction.)

#### Identifying the Application of the Different Understandings

To reiterate our theme, each of us interprets information and makes decisions every day on the basis of certain understandings about our nature and the nature of our society and what is

likely to contribute to our own and our society's well-being. But there are few among us who have only a single operative basic understanding or set of assumptions about human nature. Most of us tend to have a number of different understandings, which we use in different situations. While the lines between our different understandings are sometimes drawn between persons (e.g., in inter-disciplinary committees and inter-departmental committees, different understandings and decision-criteria may be distinguishable between the members), the most significant lines in our society are probably those that run within each of us.

It seems likely that the most important single line is that which tends to separate our public from our private lives. The basic understandings of our private and home and family lives and the criteria which flow from them are almost invariably more inclusive than those which infuse our public lives. In our personal capacities, we seem prepared to accord weight and significance to a much wider range of phenomena than we do in our capacities as professionals or specialists. Our relationships with ourselves and others and even with our environment are often quite markedly different. And the criteria against which we make decisions tend to be more imaginative, flexible and open to changing perceptions and classifications when we are acting for ourselves.

The line is not a hard and fast one, however. There are many times when we apply our more extensive personal understandings in our public life and our public understandings in our private life. While we may tend to treat our friends and families differently from the way we treat our employers or employees or our colleagues, we sometimes respond to business associates as we would to friends and to friends as we would to business associates.

The continuous shifting between more and less comprehensive criteria is something we don't talk about very much and indeed are often unaware of. The preparation of a child for his first experience in school, the rhythms imposed on a woman by a return to the world of recognized work after a period of time as a housewife, and any other sharp shifts towards a world of narrower understandings may bring them to our attention. On the other hand, it may not occur to us to ponder the reasons why business lunches or conferences are frequently more productive than office sessions. We are very often not conscious of the fact that the breadth of the criteria we are using is changing, nor do we often notice that criteria flowing from our specialized understandings may be fundamentally inconsistent with our own broader criteria - may in their applications actually be counter-productive.<sup>16/</sup>

The more inclusive criteria which seem to be used for decision-making within families are probably related to the

understandings of the inevitability of the interconnection between the actions of each individual family members.<sup>17/</sup> In any event, they seem to facilitate both greater self-restraint and a greater diversity in personal behaviour than do more specialized criteria, and to be more appropriate for transposition to a world scale where relationship must now also be thought of as interconnected rather than fragmented into specialized parts. In such a world the system of relationships is both infinite and totally interconnected — anything is related to everything — and indeed is probably defined by that relationship.

More comprehensive understandings, then, do not a priori abstract from or deny the importance of any elements or relationships but are open-ended. Many factors may be relevant to the well-being of those involved, and the appropriate perspective on any given situation is not prejudged.

### The Shift to More Comprehensive Understandings

There appears to us to be emerging clear evidence that broad person-centred understandings and the criteria which flow from them are being applied across a wider variety of fields than was true in the past. They are, for example, entering the worlds

of business and government from many directions. The balance of judgments which determines the line of application of specialized understandings is beginning to shift. This shift appears to be associated with two processes: specialized understandings are being broadened to take account of factors formerly disregarded, and many people are beginning to perceive institutions in a person-centred context.

Specialized understandings are not all equally specialized; some may be more or less comprehensive than others, depending upon how much they choose to set aside or hold constant out of all that is relevant. Some examples rooted in everyday experiences help to illustrate this point.

- A teacher who perceives and embraces in her understandings the effects of fatigue and hunger on her students and allows them to affect her decisions is acting upon a more comprehensive understanding than if they are treated as irrelevant.
- A study of judicial decisions which takes into consideration the background and experience of each judge is more comprehensive than one which doesn't.



- An architectural design which takes into account the effects of a building on those who inhabit or use it is more comprehensive than one which takes into account only appearance and cost.
- Government program analysis which embraces costs and benefits is more comprehensive than analysis which embraces merely revenues and expenditures, but less comprehensive than it might be if it excludes social costs and benefits deemed to be intangible or difficult to measure.
- Investment analysis which embraces potential social and ecological costs and benefits is more comprehensive than analysis which embraces only profitability and risk considerations.<sup>18/</sup>
- Systems analysis which embraces the possibility of value shift without any change in observed behaviour is more comprehensive than systems analysis based only on observed behaviour.

There appears to us to be growing evidence that a broader concern with inter-relationships is beginning to infuse many current systems. Among them we would include the education system, social services, the business community, and a variety of liberation movements, to mention but a few.<sup>19/</sup>

The emerging understandings are not only more comprehensive in that they take account of many more inputs and outputs than were formerly perceived (and in the process reveal that our current methods of tackling problems are often counter-productive<sup>20/</sup>), but they also shift focus. Rather than having at their core impersonal concepts of equity, efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness, growth, justice, to which persons tend to become subject, they place persons at the centre and see concepts as created by and subject to persons. And the world, which is two-dimensional (inputs, outputs) under specialized understandings, is suddenly perceived as three dimensional...multi-dimensional. From being less than rational, man becomes more than rational — imaginative, intuitive. The limits of his capacities are seen to be largely unexplored.<sup>21/</sup> (We really know remarkably little about ourselves, when you come to think of it!)

The second root of change then is that the understandings which operate in our private lives are beginning to be legitimated and reinforced and applied across a wider spectrum of activities.<sup>22/</sup> As these understandings spread at different rates for different people and with respect to different issues, increasingly insistent questions are directed to the assumptions on which many of our institutions rest and different (more person-centred) criteria come to be applied against the traditional functions of those institutions.

## The New Awareness

The development of broadening person-centred understandings is a phenomenon which appears to be extending across the world. It appears to be related to a new awareness, a larger perspective on human affairs than has prevailed in the past. Significant numbers of us appear quite suddenly to be seeing ourselves more clearly, against a longer historical perspective, across a broader cultural spectrum, and against a clearer reflection of our relationships with the people around us, with nature and even with ourselves. This is not the first time such a phenomenon has occurred, although it may be the first time that people all over the world have been involved. In all ages there have been those who lived and perceived themselves in a long perspective or against a broad spectrum of their contemporaries. Why then do their numbers appear suddenly to be growing?

The causes of this new awareness are not entirely clear. We may guess that some persons today are moving towards broader perspectives and more inclusive understandings through study and reflection; others through sharing the findings of historical research on the evolution of man; some through personal experience such as are imposed by poverty, oppression, or the burden of government or business responsibilities; some through encounters and confrontations that force the questioning of familiar assumptions.<sup>22A/</sup> It can also be hypothesized that many come to

question old understandings and to formulate new ones because of the impact of communications, particularly the mass media which reveal our institutional forms and their workings as they have never before been so clearly exposed. (This subject is dealt with at greater length in later sections.)

Books such as "Visions 2020: Fifty Canadians in Search of a Future"<sup>23/</sup> and "The Immense Journey"<sup>24/</sup> help to lengthen the historical perspective against which we customarily see ourselves; international relationships and trading patterns bring other cultures closer to home; the war in Vietnam and religious ecumenism force us to re-examine aspects of our heritage; the effects of growing bureaucracies and a variety of liberation movements expose the sometimes inhuman quality of our relationships with others; pollution and the despoilation of the environment cause us to question their sources; and other more personal media of communications like sensitivity training, encounter groups and even ESP force us to come to know ourselves better. A growing appreciation of the adverse effects of decisions flowing from too-specialized understandings also contributes to this new awareness.

Whatever its causes, the new awareness puts into question some of the criteria which have commonly been used to make decisions across a broad range of human activity at the same time that it confirms others. As this new awareness grows, more and more people appear to be using a more comprehensive framework to interpret the



world around them, and to be struggling to apply "person-centred" insights to a wider sphere of activity. The net result is that the balance of judgments is subtly and slowly altered throughout society as a whole.

This shifting balance of judgments, when it is eventually revealed in behaviour, is often interpreted as simple and sudden shifts in values. But it is less than simple and often not as sudden as it may appear. It is probably often the case that the shifts occur well before they find clear articulation in the daily lives of persons experiencing them. Many people for example think long and hard about changing their life style before actually moving to do so, whether this involves taking a retraining program, early retirement, or a move to communal living. Nor do these shifts in judgment necessarily occur across the whole range of experience of any one person -- most heightenings of awareness are modest in scope, with their implications only gradually becoming clear. Nor does it follow that broader understandings will necessarily infuse decisions and become visible in behaviour at all -- many insights will be rejected and many ultimately perverse decisions adhered to for the comfort which the familiar brings.

The relative speed at which a new outlook appears to have developed in recent months, however, seems to be greater than can be explained either by the speed at which personal decision criteria are expanding into broader fields or the rapidity with which the system-centred world is moving to more inclusive



understandings. We can only hypothesize that both are so clearly moving towards a new synthesis that many persons are prepared to risk jumping the gap more on the basis of intuition than logic. A new logic then becomes apparent.<sup>25/</sup> The spark that jumps the gap we suspect is "revelation" — the making of connections across apparently disparate fields and issues, the sudden "of course!", "aha!", "that's what he meant!", and so on.

The point where specialized system-centred understandings become embraced by comprehensive "person-centred" understandings has been called "going through the looking glass", "turning the world inside out". For most people who experience it, it constitutes a shift in perception which is not unlike a visual shift (such as the well-known drawing of an ascending/descending staircase), except that it embraces the whole environment, including oneself.<sup>26/</sup> This may be an exhilarating or a frightening experience, since much that was once important may become trivialized and much that was formerly considered trivial may assume great importance.

### Effects of the New Awareness

When specialized system-centred understandings are embraced in person-centred understandings, "objective knowledge"

becomes simply one kind of subjective understanding. What is "real" is no longer taken for granted. Concepts and theories and myths are seen as having been conceived in the minds of men, then shared with others and accumulated. Even the laws of science and the tenets of economics, business, politics and religion become nothing more nor less than a set of interpretations — powerful interpretations to be sure — of the world around us that have extended our capacity to deal with the "coercive" realities of rock and water, hunger and cold, and our need for each other. Social institutions, in other words, are perceived as fully mutable, capable of being changed as the understandings, the consciousness, of those they serve change. The effects of Vatican II on the church, of Max Planck on physics, and of Columbus on the world of his day are examples of comparable, if less comprehensive, shifts in perception.

The feeling that "it doesn't have to be done this way" occurs to any thoughtful person with respect to particular practices in his own firm or department, or even in the home. Beyond these personally familiar areas, society has traditionally acknowledged and rewarded inventors, scientific and social, such as Edison and Keynes. What appears to be happening today is at once more generalized and more fundamental than the illustrations just cited. Growing numbers of people seem to be coming to recognize that our understandings of the world have also been accumulated

little by little as they were invented to meet the needs of their time, each small contribution adding to the accumulated total of society's myths. The total itself is continually changing as those realities no longer useful are weeded out and rejected (e.g., the concept that the world is flat, the idea that governments must always balance their budgets.)

It is not surprising, then, that "demythologizing" and consciousness-raising tend to preoccupy those who come to see their own specialized understandings moving towards a more open framework — a more adequate mythology. This preoccupation may be directed inwards towards heightening one's own awareness or outwards towards others. But most people who experience these opening perspectives probably engage in both. Many works of art, drama and poetry, together with the writings of people like Paulo Friere<sup>27/</sup>, Peter Berger<sup>28/</sup>, Manfred Halpern<sup>29/</sup> and Kurt Vonnegut<sup>30/</sup> are indicative of a perspective so different from our public "mega-machine" understandings as to amount to a virtual flip of perception.

### What is Real?

As people's perspective alters, as one vanishing point fades and another supersedes it, one hears the statement "The world I used to inhabit isn't real to me anymore". We ourselves

have heard these words or words like them in recent weeks from people in education, hospital administration, economic policy-making, social work and public administration with respect to professional meetings they had attended or other quite commonplace situations in their own fields.

Under such circumstances, a concern about polarization seems warranted, a concern about the disappearance of a middle ground of perception on which all can agree and which appears to be an essential element for stable societies.<sup>31/</sup> That the middle ground does in fact appear to be vanishing is, we believe, due to the rapid spreading of new understandings among increasing numbers of people in our society. Coupled with this is the growing discomfort in the minds of those who have not experienced such a perceptual shift and who see their familiar and accepted world apparently coming under radical attack. Across such a perception gap, each side may view the other with distrust, suspicion and some fear.

Those who live within the specialized understandings rather than on top of them become increasingly "unreal" to those who are breaking through to new ground — to broader understandings. The senior administrator or advisor who lives this mega-machine role in his whole life style; the corporate executive who puts down the concerns of consumers as though he himself were not also a consumer;



the public servant who is predominantly concerned with his "career"; the student who devotes his exclusive attention to preparing for his role in the production machine; all are seen as "empty", "not there", "machine-like", "unresponsive", "unreal" by those with a more embracing view of man and society.

On the other hand, those who live within specialized understandings may perceive people with comprehensive understandings as irrelevant, idealistic, impractical, often proposing old notions that have already been tried and found wanting or jeopardizing what they perceive to be a humane society. Ideas and interpretations rooted in person-centred understandings may also be seen as undisciplined, non-expert, "not logical".

At its extreme, the gap in dialogue is immense. For those living predominantly within the specialized understandings, the shortage of time to pursue such dialogue appears to be acute — "one needs action now to deal with this problem, not a lot of philosophizing about it." For those possessing the new perspective, the current focus of concern on the "specialized" problems of our time — on the "hard facts" of business, the labour market, government, prices, political campaigns, school systems and all the other realities we are all so familiar with — and the attempt to meet those problems with specialized solutions which they see as damaging creates for them the impression that they are living in two different worlds in the same time and space.



## Current Problems

The problems which have been generated in a world organized largely on the basis of specialized understandings — problems of over-population, pollution, over-armament, poverty in the midst of affluence — may be seen as generated in large part by these specialized understandings themselves and not subject to solution within them.

"The problems of expanding markets, ever-expanding consumption, growing shortages of raw materials, pollution, waste, higher prices, are world-wide, and are becoming a nightmare for mankind. Yet the answer offered us is to increase at an even greater rate, with dire warnings against our failure to do so. The key to success, in the conventional political-economic view, is technological development and economic growth. The wonder is that the burden and hope is placed on technological growth, of providing employment, just as if the technology were not, with every step in its growth, reducing the necessity of human intervention and freeing men for non-technological employment. The development of technologically-advanced industry can obviously not be expected to increase jobs in the industrial sense. The position I want to urge here is that the approach we are offered makes an end of what should only be a means. We are in a situation where our attitudes towards each other, our human goals, are truly subordinated to mechanical ends. I am taking the well-recognized position that satisfying human relationships, or a 'quality of life' must be the end, and that economic and technological actions should be only means to it." <sup>31A/</sup>

From this vantage point, it is not surprising that many who regard themselves as practical men of affairs appear impractical

to others, as "the slaves of some defunct economist" to use Keynes' words<sup>32/</sup>, attacking problems by methods seen as foredoomed to failure. That Keynes himself is now seen as a defunct economist by many people would probably not in the least have disconcerted him.<sup>33/</sup> He was also the author of the following lines which reveal that he was well aware of the fact that particular understandings could be outgrown:

"We shall be able to rid ourselves of many of the pseudo-moral principles which have hagridden us for 200 years, by which we have exalted some of the most distasteful of human qualities into the position of the highest virtues."

The gap in dialogue and the general difficulties of our times are leading many people today to "drop out", to "disconnect", in despair or disgust. Not all commentators on the social scene are despairing, however. Many, observing the growth in the number of people whose balance of judgments has shifted or is in the process of shifting, and noting too the application of new criteria in decision-making, refer to what they are witnessing as "a new renaissance", "the beginning of post-civilization", "an emerging post-industrial society".<sup>34/</sup> These interpretations suggest that it is social rather than physical structures which will more and more dominate man's attention, that the territory over which he seeks to assert control will increasingly be a psychic, invisible and socially constructed space in which questions of material,

visible, and physical territory and possessions will be embraced, rather than being dominant as they are today. The challenge offered by a job, for example, may well be more important even now in our society than the ability it affords to acquire material possessions such as a house or a car.<sup>35/</sup>

### Implications for All of Us as Decision-makers

The simultaneous existence of different understandings in our society and the rapid growth of new understandings has already and will increasingly have profound and at times uncomfortable implications for all of us for decision-making in all our roles.

In a specialized system-centred world, the locus of decision-making tends to become increasingly centralized and the process itself increasingly non-participatory. Within the system of monetized and maximizing exchange relationships (the economy), governments and other organizations beyond a certain size tend to grow, those outside it (families and voluntary associations) to be eroded. The pattern of growth is predominantly dictated by narrowly defined "efficiency" considerations only modestly qualified by considerations of human dignity. The criteria flowing out

of specialized understandings become the engine of technology, and the economists the engineers. A value consensus around the predominant importance of overcoming scarcity leads to a willingness to delegate decisions, and even in democracies power becomes concentrated in the hands of "experts". The process is helped by the fact that, since many externalities are not taken into account, economies of scale will probably be grossly overestimated. And the large get larger as imperfections in capital markets reward rather than restrain concentrations of power. Despite rising levels of education and hence presumably of competence, the sheer complexity of life in a mega-machine world reinforces the willingness to delegate authority and erodes the energies needed to secure its return.

Decision-making on the basis of broad person-centred understandings tends, conversely, to be increasingly decentralized and increasingly participatory; the decision-making processes tend to be open and responsive to intervention. The basis of understanding from which we move to solve problems, or even to define them, will thus deeply affect the decision process itself as well as the shape of the society built on those decisions. It will also heavily influence the context in which the issue of citizen involvement in the decision-making process is seen and it has crucial implications for communications policy.

### Summary of Approach

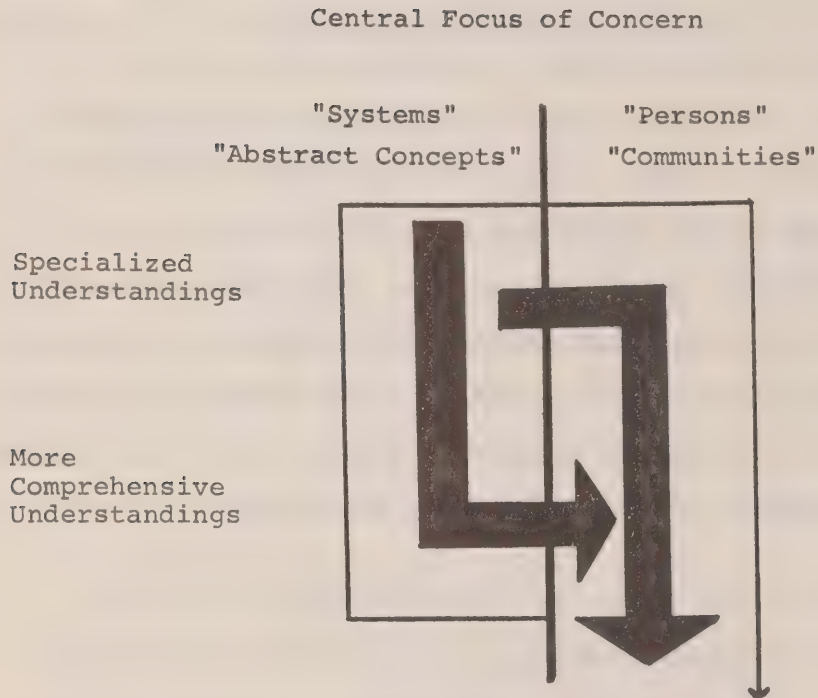
We have argued that citizen involvement is probably best appreciated as an aspect of the more general issue of decision-making in our society, and that decisions, whether made by persons or institutions, tend to flow from basic understandings. We have further noted that the basic understandings operative in our society today and in ourselves, may be more or less comprehensive and person- or system-centred. Furthermore, these understandings are not always consistent amongst themselves, the criteria flowing from one understanding perhaps leading to decisions that another would perceive as counter-productive or damaging.

At the present time most of our institutions and our man-made environment reflect the specialized and system-centred understandings on which they were constructed: e.g., the economic system, the political system, the health care system, the educational system. The problems bred of inconsistencies among these understandings and of their inadequate comprehension of human needs are, however, increasingly conspicuous in such phenomena as urban growth, poverty amidst affluence, growing disrespect for both law and law enforcement officers, alienation, and industrial pollution. These problems, in conjunction with other forces, are leading to an "opening-up" of the specialized institutions to take account of more and more factors that were formerly "external" to them. For



example, governments are taking increasing responsibility for industrial research and development, businesses are taking more responsibility in the communities in which they are situated, universities are taking more responsibility for opening their facilities to a broader public, governments are taking account of an increasingly broad range of factors in program evaluation. As this process continues and accelerates, the specialized understandings seem likely ultimately to become engulfed in comprehensive understandings which will take much more explicit account of interrelationships. But this move towards greater comprehensiveness of understanding is occurring simultaneously with another and more significant shift — the gradual extension of person-centred understandings and the decision criteria which flow from them over a broader compass of activities. They are already to be found growing within and around all our institutions and theories, although we don't often acknowledge them, and are likely soon to transform them. Our present practical world of affairs will then be perceived almost as a work of art, as a human and improvable structure called civilization contained within a new and unknown post-civilization. The tools through which human well-being is pursued will then be quite different from the policies of today.<sup>36/</sup>

### III. A Knight's Move



The basic understandings which underlie most government policies at the present time probably fall in the upper left hand corner. The people appear to be leaving by the exit in the lower right hand corner.

#### IV. Policy Implications: Where do we go from here?

##### A Question of Relevance

If the analysis of the preceding sections is relevant to the situation of our society as we believe it is, it has implications which embrace the whole field of public policy. A great deal could be said about them, but in this section we propose simply to indicate their general outline before turning to consider some key questions which they pose for policies concerned with citizen involvement and communications. And while our general emphasis continues to be speculative and future-oriented, we think these policy implications are as relevant to the present as to the future.<sup>1/</sup> The future is not detached from us but constructed by us day by day — and under "a tyranny of small decisions" at that.<sup>2/</sup>

But to form the basis for new policy directions and priorities, the analysis would have to be tested for its relevance to others. In a world in which our realities are seen to be constructed by us and are increasingly disparate, we are badly in need of an analysis which will elicit widespread agreement on at least some fundamental points. The legacy of our mega-machine world is an interdependence among people and between people and systems too complex to be grasped intuitively. The society as a whole is also increasingly vulnerable to disruption by the few through accident, neglect or design.

If there were general agreement that an analysis such as that contained in Section II was relevant, what would be its implications for public policy? They would, unquestionably, be quite different in character from those policy prescriptions which are now commanding the attention of most governments.

Policies must be judged by  
their effects on people

Our analysis suggests that to define and pursue societal goals and to be guided in this activity by calibrated measures of success such as social or economic indicators is to approach problems in ways which are self-defeating, and which would well reinforce the very ills they are trying to resolve. Unsatisfactory as such a conclusion may be in the light of our present perceptions, it is nonetheless where the analysis takes us.

This is not to say that the analysis does not have positive policy implications and that outcomes should be random. Far from it. It suggests very clearly that policies must be judged by their effects on people. But if people are to be elevated to the centre of our concern, then our analysis clearly suggests that it is better to develop policies in terms of avoiding or reducing damage to people than in terms of seeking to promote their well-being against pre-defined and standardized criteria, or measures of "success". What this suggests is that we should undertake a process of examining

the purposes of our institutions and identifying those policies or aspects of policies which may be serving to fragment people and communities. By such a process we can perhaps begin to understand what routes should be avoided.<sup>3/</sup>

While at first sight such a suggestion might seem strange to most of us, it nonetheless commends itself for a number of reasons:

- the negative elements of policy design are probably more readily identifiable than the positive;
- agreement on the negative elements is likely to be more widespread;
- positive policy goals tend to lead to more and more narrowly defined "utopian" societies, to the fostering of specialized rather than comprehensive understandings;<sup>4/</sup>
- a wide-option society, which lets choice develop over time and offers more varied combinations of the options available at any point in time, is less damaging to people as well as less costly than is a many-option society which attempts to offer and structure many choices;<sup>5/</sup>



- policies focussed upon reducing the fragmentation of persons-in-community help to develop more comprehensive understandings, while policies focussed on specialized systems and the abstract concepts at their centre lead to increasingly narrow perceptions of reality;
- such an approach enhances the possibility that some social adjustments which are clearly becoming necessary can be made without damaging discontinuities.

It is clear that the scarcity-focussed world and its institutions will continue to be with us for a long time to come, and that the world we know today will not be transformed overnight. But it is also clear that certain social transformations must soon occur if we are to live in a world free from the social tensions which appear to be dividing us today. Perhaps the greatest contribution which the governments of our nation states can make to these social transformations is to be cognizant of the fact that policies which fail to take account of externalities will breed problems. It is not too soon to begin to evaluate public policies for their externalities — for the acknowledged social realities which the policies themselves neglect.

In sum, then, the policy implications flowing from the above analysis appear to us to commend themselves not only on the basis of a number of practical considerations, but because they may point the optimum way to a world of free and responsible persons-in-community.<sup>6/</sup>

V. Citizen Involvement:  
Some Key Questions

It is accepted in liberal democratic societies that "those who are affected by decisions should have the right to participate in making them" and it is now coming to be accepted that this right involves more than the right to vote at intervals for elected representatives. But the perception of who is affected, and hence the implications of such a statement, depend upon the basic understandings from which it flows.

If, for example, a government program is under discussion and the discussion is predicated upon specialized system-centred understandings, those who are affected are probably perceived to be those to whom the program is primarily directed, plus some others upon whom it will have secondary effects. More comprehensive and person-centred understandings would alter this perception. The difference between the two can perhaps be made most apparent by taking the approach suggested in the previous section and asking whether anyone is potentially damaged by the program. Those who are sure to be unaffected may then be eliminated from consideration.

But such a shift in perspective suddenly brings vividly into focus the world as it is structured today, and the fact that no one of us can be sure of being unaffected by any program of any

government anywhere in the world. Whether a program breeds a revolutionary, controls a birth rate, spawns an idea or eradicates a pest, any one of us may potentially be affected.

This shift in the perception of the population-at-interest brings home the degree to which residents of adjacent provinces (and indeed all Canadians), travellers in Canada, trading partners abroad, and even potential recipients of foreign aid may be affected by the programs of the Government of Ontario. The approach reveals that we have typically drawn our circles of those affected much too narrowly and that the ramifications of a program may become much more obvious if we go at it the other way around, gradually improving our capacities to deal with problems in a more comprehensive way.

The price to be paid for this more encompassing view, however, is a greatly heightened sense of the burden of responsibility resting on participants in decision-making processes. It is of course patently obvious that not everybody can participate in every decision affecting them, and that not even all those most directly affected can participate in many of the decisions affecting them. The vast majority of those affected by any decisions are therefore heavily dependent upon the perceptions and the good faith of those who are directly involved in making it.



Such a shift in perspective, which appears to us to be well underway<sup>1/</sup>, could transform the issue of citizen involvement as well as the role of nation states and provincial governments. The urgency of our becoming more responsive to the needs of the people of the entire world (and their becoming more responsive to ours) becomes more apparent. So too do those routes which may lead in this direction, with greater citizen involvement figuring prominently among them.

We may also, or so it appears, be drawing the definitions of our problems much too narrowly. Thus domestic and international disparities in income distribution, for example, are probably better understood in the context of a world organized around predominant perceptions of scarcity (a mega-machine society) than as isolated problems within it.<sup>2/</sup> Citizen involvement too, if approached simply as an aspect of the decision-making process in today's world, is probably too narrowly defined and should be expanded to embrace as well the identification of problems and action upon them. Indeed, "judging" and "acting" and "learning" and "experimenting" and "experiencing" and "becoming" seem likely to be much more integrated activities within persons and institutions than heretofore, and the components of citizen involvement — where it begins and where it ends — may well be indistinguishable.

In the process of change which is underway, the role of government seems likely to undergo a shift in emphasis from a managerial to a supportive activity. The responsibility of those in government would then no longer be predominantly "to govern" with some assurance, but "to nurture" with some humility. The responsibility of the citizen-participant would no longer be to qualify and temper the judgment of public policy "experts" in a decision-making process which often takes on the character of a confrontation<sup>3/</sup>, but to develop a greatly enhanced capacity for making appropriate judgments and to act on these. The role of party officials, elected representatives and public servants would be to facilitate the development of this new expertise and to participate, upon request, in the process of personal and community decision-making.

We now turn to some key questions about this process of change.

Question: While the above scenario might seem at first glance to turn the world inside out, are we already well into this process?

- What is the significance of election campaigns on the basis of persons and personalities, and election victories on the basis of "no promises" campaigns?
- What is the significance of "the future is not for profits, it is not for machines, it is not for systems and computers, it is not for technocrats — it is for people"?

- Are large organizations (governments, businesses, labour unions, churches, universities, voluntary associations) facing different problems or really quite similar problems with respect to demands for involvement, demands for greater social accountability?
- Is the rise of temporary associations and task-oriented groups a part of the pattern?
- Is the pollution issue generating a wider sense of "belonging", of "membership" in world society and of the need for "stewardship", for "nurturing"?
- Are such community initiatives as Action 70 in Ottawa and such planners' initiatives as involving the public in Highway 417 decision both on converging paths to a new mode of decision-making?
- Has the frontier of knowledge, the frontier of research and invention, already moved out of the universities and laboratories and research institutions? And is it now to be found in those places where people as people, and people as representatives of institutions, meet face to face, inventing and applying new understandings from day to day?
- And what is the significance of the administrator for whom the central office is no longer "real" and who asks to be transferred back to the field; the doctor coming out of the hospital and into the community clinic; the scientist coming out of his lab to engage in political action; the lawyer coming out of his office to work in a storefront legal clinic? Is this where the action is — where our society is being transformed? Is this already where the truly hard and scientific policy analysis is taking place on the basis of calculations far more comprehensive than numerical data can contain and against criteria far more complicated than can be captured by any policy analyst or program evaluator acting only in his professional capacity? Is this becoming the real cradle of innovation in our society and the source from which the most significant new technologies will henceforth be generated?

- And are these forces already blurring sharp distinctions between workers, consumers, shareholders and management; between the public and the private sector; between what is investment and what is consumption and what is production; between work and leisure and play?
- And are they blurring too the lines between different groups in the population at the same time as they are heightening the identification of individuals? Is Women's Lib not only freeing women to become more like men but freeing them also to become more spontaneous like children?

Question: If it is agreed that it would be desirable to move away from the fragmentation of persons and communities, how may this process be facilitated? What particular obstacles might we expect to find in its course?

- Are our own specialized understandings, with their strong centralizing pressures, going to be difficult to think about? Is this what Walt Kelly, the creator of Pogo, meant by "we have met the enemy and it is us"?
- Is a thorough policy review adequate without looking to the basic purposes of our institutions and their conception of human well-being?
- If new understandings cannot be "implemented", i.e., managed or coerced, can they be "facilitated"? And what does this mean?
- Are managerial problems likely to move closer and closer to the personal level, and to the level of persons-in-community acting together in voluntary association? If so, should we be thinking more clearly about how personal management can be facilitated and worrying less about the problems of institutional management?



- Do opportunities for self-definition of jobs, of working hours, etc., go hand in hand with a growing sense of social responsibility? If so, are there obstacles to self-definition which we could be removing?
- Do we need a new model of "power" in which it is not necessarily scarce but can be created — in which both governments and the citizens who become involved may grow in power, even as "the government" may be shrinking in size?

Question: What implications does this analysis have for the possibility of identifying those patterns and techniques of citizen involvement which have a high capacity to generate responsibility and therefore power?

- What would happen to our thinking about citizen involvement if we explored the whole of the political system with a view to identifying those barriers to two-way face-to-face discussion between persons and those to whom they have delegated responsibilities for their welfare?
- Would a two-way "opportunities for participating" program, which facilitated citizen involvement in government and the involvement of government officials in community enterprises, be a good idea?
- Are there contradictions at the level of basic understandings inherent in having citizens sitting on advisory councils in their professional capacities, e.g., lawyers on consumer advisory groups, etc. And a related question — should tribunals be comprised of "experts" — or be more akin to juries with access to expertise?
- Are some voluntary associations more likely to survive into the future than others? Do we have models of task-oriented temporary associations that can shrink

to nothing or to a watchdog role when their immediate task is done? Are there governmental functions which could be performed by these groups? Do the Red Cross, volunteer fire brigades, ski patrols, provide us with models to think about?

- Is it useful to think about citizen groups on the basis of whether they are growing in power and responsibility, rather than on the basis of structures and membership and continuity?4/
- Are there particular instruments of citizen involvement (white papers, advisory councils, meetings with citizen groups) which are likely to prove more satisfactory than others, or does this rest less on the instrument itself than on the context — the prevailing quality — of citizen-government relations in which any instrument is used?
- And is it the subject matter of the issue which is important (health, education, taxation) or again a more subtle and encompassing factor — the quality of relationship?

Question: What implications does this analysis have for the size, organization and style of government, including the party system, the legislature, the cabinet, government agencies and departments, and the recruitment and training of public servants?

- Is voting being encompassed by more sensitive devices for decision-making?
- Will the notion of an official and structured opposition come to seem artificial?
- In a many-tiered system of government, can more than one tier continue to be predominantly defined by geography?
- Can people behave responsibly if government is "too big to know"?

- Should government departments become more or less differentiated by function?
- Should high and low ranking public servants become more or less differentiated by function?
- Should the processes of government, as of living and of learning, be more openly acknowledged to be processes of trial and error?
- Has government grown because it is the residual institution, the institution of last resort, responsible for patching together a society continuously threatened by the consequences of specialized understandings? And as externalities are more and more taken into account in decisions, will the functions of government shrink? (And will not "diverted output" shrink too, so that at any given level of real output a higher proportion of that output will consist of desired goods and services and less of social baling wire and patches?)
- Should we therefore expect growing citizen involvement, rising real standards of living and smaller government to be part of the pattern of the future?

Among other things, this takes us to the question of how we in Canada and in Ontario are going to conceive our communications policy, a question to which we now turn.

## VI. Communications

### Some Key Questions

In a large society such as the one we live in today, face-to-face discussion between all its members is patently impossible. Thus, to enable people to reach out to one another, to exchange different points of view, to focus on newly emerging problems or to gain fresh insights on old ones, and to exchange information with a view to solving these problems, man must of necessity resort to media of communications. The ideas and opinions, and the facts and data which both reflect and form those ideas and opinions, must for the most part be communicated throughout society via special tools fashioned for this purpose. But our mega-machine understandings have shaped our communications media and we have been shaped by the media in turn.

Rather than facilitating two-way exchange, the media for the most part have come to be a channel of one-way communications — outwards, and often downwards, from those of us who have access to them to others of us at the receiving end. Access to the transmitting end of the mass media is determined by the specialized understandings of the marketplace, by the profitability and efficiency of the various media outlets. Thus, the specialized understandings of the owners, the sponsors and the advertisers have become the determinants of the types of messages transmitted.<sup>1/</sup> In place of a

two-way learning process, the media have become a vehicle through which the few to whom access is permitted educate others in the light of their own perceptions and understandings. That the few tend to have many personal similarities is both a product of our narrow understandings and a contributor to them.

McLuhan has reminded us that, apart altogether from the question of who controls access to the media, there is another factor to be considered: that the media themselves distort our perceptions of reality — of ourselves, our neighbours and our environment.<sup>2/</sup> He has referred to media as extensions of man — of his body in space, of his central nervous system and ultimately of his power of knowing. The extent to which the media are only partial extensions of man is an insight that all too often slips from our conscious perception of reality. The linear constraints of print, the absence of the visual dimension from radio transmissions, the power of the cameraman to generate within the film or television viewer a sense of involvement more apparent than real, all reinforce the specialized understandings already embedded in most of the messages and hence help to further screen our perceptions of reality.

The distortions of both media and message are not totally unperceived however. Consciously or unconsciously, the human mind records the conflicting messages conveyed over the same medium or by two or more different media. As contradiction piles on inconsistency, distrust of the media and of the institutions



which are the subjects of the bulk of their messages begins to spread. Perceptions slowly begin to change, and the values accepted without question in the past are exposed for question. The rapidity with which this happens and the depth to which it spreads is dependent on the similarity of understandings between the sender and the receiver. What appears to be happening to an increasing extent in our society today is that specialized understandings continue to predominate among those who have access to the transmitting end of the media, while at the receiving end listeners, readers and viewers in growing numbers are applying more comprehensive understandings to their interpretations of those messages.<sup>3/</sup>

That there is a growing appreciation of the failure of the traditional mass media to convey the full range of the articulated concerns of Canadians has been evidenced by some recent tangible signs. Within the last few years, there has been a rising trend towards new outlets for expression of opinions clearly running contrary to the myths which the other media cherish and live by. These newer outlets take many forms: they include open line shows on radio, action lines in the press, a noticeable increase in the number of letters to the editor, the growth of newspapers published above or under ground by citizens and community groups, and community television, at least in some communities. Outlets such as these are helping us to "hear" more clearly the scope of divergent views, to "see" more clearly the systems we have constructed, and

to recognize however reluctantly the damaging effects which are created by the interaction of systems and abstractions on human beings. But the strength of the grip of marketplace understandings on these more recent efforts to air new myths can be discerned from the fact that the lesser their success in attracting advertising revenues, the quicker their mortality rate.

But despite these newer outlets for expression, despite the fact that people do have wider access to information, ideas, expertise, opinion, and data than at any time in history, social tension, distrust and alienation abound. Why should this be so? And what can be done to overcome it?

Kenneth Boulding has suggested that an integrative society is characterized by transactions which are also integrative and that these consist mainly of communications.<sup>4/</sup> Unlike all other transactions, the exchange of information does not diminish its stock -- when the process of imparting information to someone else is completed, the information is retained by both. But it is also the case that the mega-machine society's focus on scarcity has contrived to make information scarcer than it need be. Boulding, Izumi<sup>5/</sup> and others have all commented on the fact that mass communication is a poor substitute for genuine dialogue, lacking as it does the feedback required for the sharing or creation of different perceptions of reality that occurs when people engage in face-to-face conversation. Yet all our public policies with respect to

communications appear to be primarily concerned with "things", with questions of hardware and software, rather than with questions of the quality of relationships they foster.

Our analysis leads to the conclusion that the focus of present communications policies is largely pointed in the wrong direction if human well-being is our objective. Reenforcing systems and specialized understandings, communications policies of today can be seen as the tools of the industrial society we appear to have outgrown. Moreover, the advent of computers will take us outwards from this society even more rapidly in patterns which may well be imperceptible to us now. If we are truly coming into a new era, some different criteria for communications policy need to be developed, criteria which focus not on new societies of the future but on looking back to free us from the confines of measured time and space as it is calibrated by the production machine.

In the learning process which is now underway, the trials and errors, the intuitions and hunches, the needs and responses, the experiments and experiences, the support and encouragement, will need to be communicated over networks far more complicated and less predictable in shape than current communications policy understandings embrace. In the process of building the communications capacity which seems likely to be needed, the large data networks which today are accorded high priority in a world limited to specialized mega-machine understandings will probably come to be seen as of much lesser importance than two-way people-to-people channels.

We believe that large institutions may be quick to recognize the desirability of such a shift. Governments in particular are probably more conscious than most institutions of the negative aspects of present communications policies. Held together by the mega-machine understandings, the communications media of today appear to be portraying governments not as something to which a citizen owes allegiance but as increasingly costly impersonal institutions which are not serving him particularly well. People-to-people links are the crucial factors holding geographically extended communities like Canada together, and it is through these networks of personal agreement and commitment on which our real social security will increasingly be seen to rest — our present communications policies and the way we use our communications facilities are fraying these links.

What we are suggesting then is that communications will predominantly be seen as a two-way process, the best model for which is still to be found in face-to-face discussion. We turn now to some key questions which must be considered if policy is to shift in that direction.

Question: If the government were to undertake a review of current communications policies, with a view to reducing the fragmentation of people and communities and to facilitating face-to-face communications, what policy fields might be embraced in such a review?



- What people-to-people links might be relevant?
- What actions might the government undertake to turn its own communications programs into person-centred activities?
- What changes might be made within the current communications media?

Question: What impediments could be removed in order to facilitate people-to-people communications?

- To what extent might telephone and transportation rate structures, whether within local communities, across Ontario or across Canada, be preventing communications?
- To what degree might government policies be contributing to the lack of meeting facilities for citizen group discussions?
- Are there unnecessary barriers restricting peoples' access to government officials and politicians, and to information in the government's possession?

Question: What changes might be considered within the mass communications industry as we have currently organized it?

- Are there obstacles facing community groups who endeavour to help their communities to "see" themselves more clearly in a variety of media?
- Does one-way cable contribute to the breaking of two-way connections between persons in community?<sup>6/</sup>
- Should the newest and most costly of the media — the computer utility — pattern its growth in response purely to the institutional demands? And should consideration be given now to the whole question of public access to computer-based data banks?<sup>7/</sup> And if so, what are the implications of this for the structure and design of all our data banks?



Question: To what degree is the government prepared to remove impediments to genuine dialogue between persons and to responsible decision-making by citizens, which come about through its own programs and policies?

- To what extent can government information centres contribute to the removal of these impediments?
- To what extent and in what forms can governments assist community-operated information centres without imposing impediments?
- To what extent would the removal of impediments to dialogue involve the government in greater disclosure of information?
- Do the location, structure and furnishings of government offices impose barriers to communications?<sup>8/</sup>

Questions such as these and others like them simply serve to point up the degree to which our communications environment is structured around understandings we are outgrowing, and to indicate some of the many new issues and policy choices surrounding the future of citizen involvement.

## VII. Summary

Our approach in this paper has been a highly speculative one. We have ranged widely over many phenomena, and have outlined in rough strokes the dominant patterns we see. In the process we have questioned the permanence of many of the assumptions which currently underpin our society and have suggested that the emergence of more comprehensive understandings is underway. We have then examined the issue of citizen involvement against this background.

Our context is a society in change as it moves towards more comprehensive understandings of itself. This movement is seen as being characterized at the present time by a shift in the predominant focus of concern. The problems of scarcity around which our vast mega-machine society has been organized — the problems of production, of consumption, and of obtaining a smooth flow of "output" from various sub-systems of society (economic, political, social) appear to be giving way before new concerns. These new concerns focus on harmonious processes, on creative relationships, on moving towards wholeness in persons and in society.

We have speculated that this shift in focus is occurring as the many specialized "megamachine" understandings which are extant today (e.g., in education, economics, administration, medicine,

government, etc.) begin to take account of factors which were formerly external to them but which can no longer be excluded from consideration. As the perception of how much is excluded from any particular understanding grows, the understanding opens to become more and more comprehensive. Policies only recently thought to be useful are now more often coming to be seen as counter-productive of their real objectives — improved human well-being.

The central concepts of our systems are also coming to be seen more clearly for the abstractions they are, and a shift in focus from system-centred understandings to more open person-centred understandings is taking place. In this shift, our present policy sciences are being revealed as producing something more akin to works of art reflecting the roads we have travelled in the past than rules to live by for the future. What is emerging as probably more important than the pursuit of social goals is the identification of damaging elements in our social design.

At an even higher level of generality, what is shifting may be seen to be perceptions themselves. As new ones emerge and old ones disappear, and as an appreciation of the phenomenon of change in terms of shifting perceptions becomes widely shared among the population at large, we seem likely to move towards an understanding that our future is what we make of it today, and that it is the here and the now that are significant, embracing as they do both the past and the future.



## Appendix — Community Information Centres

This Appendix departs from the speculative nature of the rest of this essay in response to the request of the Committee that we report on a new development in the field of communications — the growth of information services at the community level. We understand that this request was laid at our doorstep because of our known interests in this topic. In 1970, Information Canada commissioned us to study the question of possible federal support for "citizens' advisory bureaus" or community information centres as we prefer to call them. Its request in turn came to us because of our involvement in a voluntary capacity in the proposal of the Consumers' Association of Canada for "A Community Information Network", a concept which the Association began to study in 1968.

### Community Information Centres

In the study for Information Canada<sup>1</sup>/, we reported that information services intended for the general public could be seen as being of two more or less distinct types. On the one hand, there are information services which we described as "system-centred" — as contributing to the more effective working of existing institutions by helping certain categories of people to find their place in those systems. On the other hand, there are information centres whose image of themselves and their function is much more that of facilitating communications — of putting people in touch with other people and with institutions; these we called "person-oriented" information services.



System-centred information services tend to ensure the more efficient functioning of systems by providing people with information which would facilitate their adjustment to those systems. This was the image presented by the British "citizens' advice bureaus", the model whose feasibility in a Canadian context was the focus of our initial enquiries. Designed during the second World War, the network of bureaus which has since spread across Britain still carries with it the implication that its purpose is chiefly that of helping people discover how they might best fit into the labour market, the welfare system, the educational system and the variety of other systems that characterize all developed countries today, of telling them the nature of the rules under which these systems operate.

In trying to look at this model in the context of the needs of Canadians in the seventies, we felt that its simple transplantation would fall well short of the mark of meeting the needs of the present day. Furthermore, such services would likely be seen as merely one more layer of administrative red tape rather than as a fresh new attempt to facilitate decision-making by citizens. In the fall of 1970 when we were engaged in our research, we found that many communities in this country already had a variety of governmentally- and privately-run information services and that many more were about to open. Information Canada, for example, had just inaugurated the first of a dozen or so Enquiry Centres to be spread across the country. Federal and provincial governments had for some time placed information officers in regional offices in an effort to get closer to the people so as to better serve their needs. (However, the system focus of such efforts is apparent in the many regional offices whose visible impact on the community is more often measured in terms of a public relations function: of explaining government to the people.)

Welfare information services operating out of welfare departments and social planning councils had for many years been a long-standing feature of many communities.

Such services, whether operated by the public or the private sector, tend to serve the needs of their clients — the disseminators of information — and may do little or nothing to meet the real needs of their users as defined by them. Manpower information services, for instance, provide information about employment opportunities but they are likely to refuse to assist a person looking for an opportunity to put his talents to the service of his community in a manner which falls outside the conventionally defined labour market.

Specialized information services may also have other disadvantages when looked at from the point of view of the person. They are all too likely to reinforce the fragmented image which people have of themselves as poor, as old, as a player of a particular role, be it worker, consumer, citizen, taxpayer — as something less than a full image of man. That they are also apt to add to, rather than minimize, the difficulty a person encounters in trying to solve a particular problem which does not fit neatly into any of the pigeonholes of our existing classification systems also figures prominently among their disadvantages.

But there was also evidence that a different form of information service was emerging at the community level. In many cities and towns across Canada, privately-run information services were springing up in such numbers that it proved quite impossible to keep up with their birth rate. Often undetected by the larger community, many of them were to be found in street level neighbourhood locations, operating on shoestring budgets with the help of volunteer workers. They presented

a sharp contrast to the offices and the professionally trained staff of many of the well-funded central information services. This contrast was intriguing enough to cause us to try to explore a series of questions related to this difference in mode of operation. We hunted out some of the users as well as the operators of as wide a range of services as we could in the time available to us and tried to find answers to many questions:

- Why were neighbourhood information services springing up in communities where there was a large, apparently well-functioning central service?
- Why were there such differences between neighbourhood services themselves?
- Were services specializing in particular subject matters but operated by those affected by the same problem or by the peers of their users (welfare recipients operating welfare information services or youth drug clinics operated by youths) any more successful in meeting the needs of the community than those centres that stand ready to service all comers, regardless of the nature of their enquiries?

The answers to these and other questions did not emerge with stark clarity in the course of our conversations nor in the time spent reflecting on them. We had of necessity to resort to a hypothesis against which to test the fit of the developments we observed. Our hypothesis was this: at the other end of the spectrum from impersonal, system-centred information services are what we described as person-oriented services, characterized chiefly by a difference in approach,

in process, more than by an observable difference in their output. They tend to spring up in a given community in response to the expressed wishes of that community, not in response to the desires of program administrators to make their programs more broadly known or more effectively delivered. Their focus is essentially not on specific problems but on the person they serve in all his dimensions; while they might be designed to serve particular classes or groups of people, they would ideally operate as all-purpose information services, open to any one in the community. Finally, their operations would be marked by one crucial difference distinguishing them from the system-centred services: they would dedicate themselves to answering the full range of enquiries their users bring to them, including those with which many existing centres refuse to deal, such as informing people how to organize themselves to solve their common problems, or putting those with similar interests in touch with one another. They would, in other words, serve as two-way channels of communication between persons and between persons and institutions.

Operators of person-oriented information services would likely be persons applying more comprehensive understandings than those running system-centred services. But the difference between them could not be distinguished by any of our normal measures of personnel qualifications — by educational achievement, years of experience, age, sex or whatever. Instead the selection sieve through which comprehensive understandings are screened out must of necessity be highly experimental, based on trust, on a willingness to risk the untried, to gamble on a genuine commitment to people, on resourcefulness and ingenuity. What should count far more than educational background is a broad knowledge of community resources and particularly of the persons who comprise the real heart and core of those resources.



In our report we suggested that, were the federal government to support community information centres, it should lend its support to those with a high component of volunteer help. We hold to the conviction that government support should be put at the service of those who could break beyond the professional restraints with which our society so frequently shackles itself in the interests of efficiency.

Obviously, no one information centre fitted all the parameters of our person-centred model, though some came closer than others. But there were many centres of the specialized system-centred variety. We nevertheless came to the conclusion that the federal government should support person-centred comprehensive information services initiated by communities themselves rather than imposed on them and that such centres should be two-way media of information and expression -- in other words, in addition to answering enquiries they should also enable their users to contact others of similar interests or concerns, as well as institutions. To this end, we therefore recommend that:

- federal support might take the form of financial aid, but only in small amounts, space in federal buildings, access to expert advice with respect to how best to organize banks of information, communications services or equipment, and the provision by the National Enquiry Office of message switching services between individual community centres.
- and that this program, though small by the traditional measures of dollars and cents and the administrative support staff it would require,



should be run under the auspices of the President of the Privy Council as an indication of the high priority and the extent of encouragement given by the federal government to the efforts made by operators of community information centres to meet the needs of their communities.

### A Community Information Network

The proposal by the Consumers' Association of Canada for a Community Information Network<sup>2/</sup> changed in shape and scope from its beginning in 1968 to the point at which it emerged in a published document; it is still changing its shape in the minds of those most closely associated with it in recognition of the growth of information services responsive to users needs which has been a notable phenomenon since the CAC proposal was published.

Originally conceived to fill what appeared to be a significant gap in the public's store of information — easily accessible, up-to-date information about matters of consumer interest — the concept in its early stages shifted into a more comprehensive community information data bank. This change in thinking came about in order to take advantage of the vast storage capacity offered by the computer. As this aspect was explored and developed, one guiding principle began to emerge: that any attempt to preconceive and design a data bank which was to be easily accessible to all members of the general public would foredoom the project to failure. This principle recognized that people's needs for information differ over time, between and within various communities, between various subject fields, according to the degree of detail required, and so on.

To be truly useful, the network would have to nourish rather than suppress the diversity of needs which exists and will continue to exist among Canadians. Hence, the major concept grew into a data bank which would be constantly changing in response to the requests of its users for information, with new pieces of information coming on to the data bank in response to enquiries, replacing bits of information no longer useful or relevant to the public.

To explore the feasibility of such a concept, the CAC proposed a stage by stage examination aimed at determining whether it was in fact possible to use computer technology in supporting the diversity and range of community information needs. The first stage of such an examination envisioned the establishment of a community information network clearing house. Such a clearing house would serve as a loose link between existing community information centres, enabling their operators to talk to one another with a view to enhancing communications between centres in various communities so that they can share problems and experiences and build up an "inventory" of information for which there were frequent requests. This link would also enable them to answer questions related to other communities such as might be brought by a family contemplating a move to a new city. From such a link, the degree to which computer capacity might efficiently handle the volume of such similar questions and answers as turned up at community centres could be discerned. The clearing house could also work with other organizations to collect information of national significance which individual centres might find themselves incapable of putting together.

It would perhaps be useful to emphasize what the network is not intended to do. It is not a mechanism for standardization, for imposing on the participating information

centres set modes of operation, nor is it primarily conceived as a device to point up areas where government action or action by private service organizations may be required to fill gaps in existing services or to implement remedies to improve the workings of existing programs, though of course it would be an ideal medium for this purpose. The network, like the centres which would make up its component parts, would be dedicated to the service of persons, not institutions and their programs.

#### The Two Proposals — Where They're At

Our report for Information Canada, released in February 1971, is still under consideration by the federal government. In particular, Information Canada and the Citizenship Branch of the Department of the Secretary of State are engaged in a study of the document and in the interval have apparently suspended grants to citizen groups applying for funds with which to start community information centres. Information Canada is pursuing its program of regional Enquiry Centres and there appears to be a greater tendency towards consultation with others interested in the field than was true in the early stages of this program. However, it is our impression that such consultation as is going on is taking place mainly with other governments and with librarians, while interested community groups remain largely as outsiders to this process.

The Canadian Council on Social Development sponsored a National Consultation on Information and Referral Services in June. At this consultation there were represented such a wide range of diverse information services, from specialized

system-centred services to more comprehensive grass roots centres, that discussions at times threatened to come to a complete standstill. Participants at this consultation were divided into ten discussion groups, the line of division being that of similarity of interests. Each of these groups produced a set of recommendations about possible action in respect of the activities of Information Canada and federal support of community information centres. To resolve the inconsistencies among the recommendations emerging from the various groups, a steering committee was formed consisting of two representatives elected from each. To them fell the task of consolidating the diverse expressions of opinion so that the Council could forward to the responsible Minister as coherent a précis of views expressed at the consultation as was possible. So far as we know, the work of the steering committee is still in progress.

The Government of Ontario remains to our knowledge the only province actively engaged in funding community information centres. We are not fully up-to-date with all aspects of this program but our conversations with government officials have left us with some concerns about certain of its possible effects.

One of our concerns, among others, is that any attempt to link together existing centres in the ten largest Ontario communities into a provincial network or to stimulate the formation of new centres in other communities should not in any way impede the individuality of each of the centres. Nor should such steps be imposed on the communities by the government. If the price of financial aid from the province to participating communities is to consist of standardized models of eligible centres, standard modes of operation, standard qualifications for personnel and even standard reporting forms, then from the vantage points of the centres and



particularly of their users, the game may not be worth the candle. Just as the CAC's proposal for a national network endeavours to encourage individual centres to respond to the individual needs of their communities across the country, so too should a provincial network facilitate such diverse interests as those that may obtain between the residents of Scarborough and of the central Toronto core. (This focus on the need for protecting the individuality of community information centres was perhaps the only clear view which was persistently expressed at the CCSD Consultation.)

The proposal of the Consumers' Association has advanced somewhat further since its publication. The CAC has just announced that it has entered into an agreement with the Canadian Computer/Communications Task Force, which operates out of the federal Department of Communications, to undertake a study of existing community information centres across Canada. This study will focus on the channels of communications used by the centres and their users. This study is already underway under the direction of Diana Ironside of the Department of Adult Education of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. As a by-product of this study the CAC is planning to publish a directory of community information centres, the first of its kind in Canada. From such a print-based directory could flow the beginnings of a "live" directory — a clearing house through which those centres which wish to participate could contact one another and so gain access to a wide range of resources in order to improve the services they now offer. As the project is envisioned as a community enterprise on a national scale, CAC will shortly seek the support of other interested organizations and individuals in the continued development of the clearing house.

We have gone on at some length to describe the essential elements of these two proposals because we believe



them to be consistent with each other and with the direction in which this essay points with respect to the appropriate focus for communications policies in the seventies. Information centres at the community level, and the networks which may link them together, can become the crossroads at which individual citizens can enhance their understandings of one another and so develop a real sense of community, at which the interests of one citizen group can come to meld rather than clash with the interests of other citizen groups, at which the different understandings between citizens and those that govern them can begin to coalesce, and at which the impact on the daily lives of Canadians of the activities of the three levels of government and those of voluntary organizations which fill the interstices between them, with all their gaps, overlaps, deficiencies and inconsistencies, can be discerned. Through such two-way media of communications persons, whether in their roles as politicians, government leaders, businessmen or members of families or voluntary organizations, can improve their decision-making processes as perceptions of common interest widen.

## Notes

### Section II

1/ The attempt to predict events and outcomes is an activity which has a long and colourful history, but it was not until relatively recently that its pursuit became institutionalized in a central location in Western culture. The National Bureau of Economic Research, established in the 1930's in the United States, attempted to provide forecasts of business activity for the purpose of controlling business cycles. However, it was only when economic growth became the focus of attention in the 1950's and 1960's that large-scale systematic efforts were undertaken in the context of planning for the future. Many Western governments set up specialized planning in an advisory capacity, e.g., the Rand Corporation in the United States, the Economic and Science Councils of Canada. Conferences and commissions also proliferated, special institutes for the future were established, and at least one journal devoted to the future appeared. Afficionados ("futures buffs") formed organizations, science fiction became increasingly popular as some of the most imaginative of scientifically trained persons put forth (and hedged) their bets through this medium, and in 1971 two books on the shape of the future, The Greening of America and Future Shock were on the best seller list. Without Marx or Jesus may well be on the list this season.

Charles A. Reich, The Greening of America, Random House, New York, 1970.

Alvin Toffler, Future Shock, Random House, New York, 1970.

Jean-François Revel, Without Marx or Jesus, Doubleday, New York, 1971.

2/ To be improved upon, this society needs first to be examined and understood. After commenting upon many of Western man's attempts at improving his condition through social reform and the rejection of a variety of "isms" (royalism, feudalism, etc.) Mumford states:

"This attempt to make a new beginning rested on the valid perception that at various points something had profoundly gone wrong in man's development. Instead of accepting this as ineradicable, as an integral defect for which the theological name had been original sin, and instead of submitting to it as fatally ordained by the gods, Western man, in his growing self-confidence, wanted to wipe the slate clean and begin all over. And therein lay a trap, for in order to overcome time, in order to begin anew, it was imperative for him not to run away from his past but to confront it, and literally to live down its traumatic events within himself. Until every generation did this consciously, examining its hoary traditions in the light of new experience, evaluating and selecting every part of its heritage, man could make no fresh start. In one mind after another, that effort was begun, but at too early a point it was abandoned. So it remains an urgent task for those who still seek a better world in our own day."

Lewis Mumford, "The Mega-Machine", extracts from his book Pentagon of Power, as reproduced in the New Yorker, October 10, 1970.

- 3/ Any mother understands that a child does not need food first and love afterwards, but food in a context of love. Nonetheless as a society we behave as though the connection was linear and sequential — material concerns coming first and psychic second — our primary concern is for our standard of living and then following that for the quality of life. Abraham Maslow's name has been associated with the notion of a hierarchy of needs but we do not believe that his findings would support the notion that a society should behave collectively in this way. Furthermore, insofar as we are familiar with it, his work would seem to indicate secondary and tertiary needs appear very quickly upon the heels of primary need satisfaction and that this occurs whenever the immediate need for food, oxygen, sleep, etc., is satisfied.

See Frank Goble, The Third Force, Grossman Publishers Inc., New York, 1970.

4/ Charles Reich, among others, has commented on this:

"The central reality is that evil today is the product of our system of organization and our technology, and that it occurs because personal responsibility and personal awareness have been obliterated by a system deliberately designed to do just that — eliminate or minimize the human element and insure the supremacy of the system. The whole purpose of this system is to reduce the human component; that is why we have organization charts, a hierarchy of supervision, divided responsibilities, specialization. In the main, it is this rational organization of human effort that has brought us to our present stage of civilization, but we should realize that inherent in the very design of the system is the disappearance of individual blame, and hence the obsolescence of our concepts of individual criminal responsibility."

Reflections: "The Limits of Duty", The New Yorker, June 19, 1971.

5/ From a recording by Tom Lehrer, That Was the Year That Was, ASCAP, Reprise, 1965.

6/ C.B. Macpherson, The Real World of Democracy, The Massey Lectures, Fourth Series, CBC Publications, Toronto, 1965.

7/ Specialized understandings may be arrived at in a number of different ways. It may be that what is excluded is not perceived — that there is an unconscious exclusion of other people's realities (hence the importance of checking with other people); it may be that elements which are omitted from a calculation are believed to be offsetting in their effects, or that they are not relevant at all; or they may be omitted simply because they are difficult to measure.

The result of specialized understandings is assertive and rigid rather than tentative and contingent classification. People, for example, tend to be predominantly perceived in fixed categories (e.g., they may be seen as women, Indians,



criminals, poor, before they are seen as people), and it is the standard, the norm, which becomes most visible — more visible even than the individual difference from the norm. (Cf. the difference between a photographic negative and its print.) Rather than being seen in their full dimension as persons, people are seen as less than they are.

At the core of specialized understandings is an abstraction (a "thing", an "idea", a "notion"), e.g., political activity, housing, good government, equity, justice. And specialized understandings form the basis of most of our theories and systems. The less comprehensive the understanding underlying any system, the less capacity for responsiveness that system will have — the less "response-ability" to the individual human being and the human community.

- 7A/ Thus justice tends to become measured in terms of rigidity and mechanically defined rights; education in years of schooling, regardless of individual differences in capacity; governments by the number of laws they pass; and business corporations by their profitability.
- 8/ David E. Woodsworth, in the keynote address "Social Policies for Tomorrow" at the annual meeting of the Canadian Council on Social Development, September 1971, commented on this:
- "Most of us have for our whole lives been inhibited from saying, or even thinking the kind of thing that Bell is saying here...." (The reference is to the work of Daniel Bell). "Serious examination of the accepted doctrines has been treated, informally or even legally, as disloyalty or treason."
- 9/ Marshall McLuhan too speaks of having turned in the fire alarm and then being "charged with arson."
- Marshall McLuhan, a letter to the editor of the Atlantic Magazine, September 1971.



- 10/ Not only has our perceptual poverty kept us from "seeing" many things, it has kept us too from listening to many things — we simply do not "hear" them.
- 11/ Manfred Halpern, "A Redefinition of the Revolutionary Situation", Journal of International Affairs, Vol. XXIII, No. 1, 1969.
- 12/ Even in circumstances where most people would probably concur that it is the process and not the product which is of pre-dominant importance, we nonetheless tend to measure effectiveness by output; e.g., "hours of leisure" or its complement "length of work week", "patients treated", "cases closed", "statutes enacted", "teaching load", "meetings held", etc.
- 13/ See Richard Titmuss, The Gift Relationship, Pantheon Books, New York, 1971.
- 14/ See Kenneth Boulding, Beyond Economics, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1968.
- 15/ New light is cast on the following concepts, among others: justice, equity, human rights, foreign aid, foreign ownership, national defence, profitability, human resource development, competition, cost-benefit analysis, property, social indicators, privacy, communications and the tenets of good government ("guiding policy development through planning; taking advantage of economies of scale opportunities; minimizing financial corruption; ensuring that public servants are "politically" neutral; ensuring the capacity for vigorous action and for action not based solely on parochial considerations", q.v. C.O.G.P. study outline, section five).

Problems also appear in a different light, e.g., peace, poverty, pollution, unemployment, urban affairs, science policy, regional disparities, constitutional reform.

16/ There seems to be a point at which, as a specialized understanding of a problem becomes more comprehensive, previous prescriptions for its solution appear to be unproductive, if not actually counter-productive. At this point people will begin to see what is being done as "inverted" or "perverse". (Professor Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, Nobel laureate and author of The Crazy Ape, believes we are living through a period of inversion in social relations.

"Greatest U.S. need: Americanization of America", The Ottawa Journal, October 4, 1971.)

Remedies developed on the basis of specialized "machine-model" understandings may then "heat up" situations, e.g.

- a government may encourage citizen involvement on the basis of too narrow an understanding of it, and simply breed more intense demands for more involvement
- a government may take special measures designed to enhance the status of women (or Indians, or youth) and damage them further, leading to more protest
- adults may propose day care services for children, not perceiving that children may be further damaged by them,
- a guaranteed annual income may be seen as a "pay-em-off, write-em-off" device, and so on.

The great blossomings of liberation movements all over the world bear the common characteristic of being attempts to elevate the importance of persons as persons over any of their special characteristics (colour, sex, age, economic disadvantage, etc.). Thus, Blacks, Gays, women, consumers, citizens, the poor, have in common the rejection of narrow

role definitions that are imposed by specialized understandings and are attempting to break beyond them. Attempts to resolve their difficulties within the role definition, e.g., special measures for women, are likely to enhance rather than diminish the existing role-constraints which these movements are protesting and to inhibit the development of a perception that persons have hegemony over any of their created institutions.

17/

"It is in this context that the family assumes great importance. The decision rules or modes of decision-making which may be operative within those families where people live together in close voluntary association are probably similar to those which will be necessary on a broad scale if we are to move towards a more satisfactory human existence on this planet. Not always explicit, they tend nonetheless to be concerned with human processes, and to embrace among other things the direct interactions among persons as well as interactions transmitted by intervening objects. They thus include as a matter of course the very considerations which our current collective decision rules (public policies) tend to overlook or exclude. Few of our current economic and social policy criteria, for example, are sufficiently embracing to encompass the interactions among persons which flow in and around planned social change, interactions whose unintended consequences may well thwart the expressed purposes of the change. Such intrusions not only occur directly through interpersonal relations but are also transmitted indirectly through the manner in which material goods are produced or used. The number and extent of such interactions have been greatly increased in recent years with the development of modern communications media. They have also been sharply increased in less obvious ways as the activities of one person (or a group of persons or a nation of persons) inadvertently impinge more and more upon those of their neighbours. This, of course, enormously increases the number of interactions — the number of ways in which the activities of any one person (or community or nation) may affect the well-being of others. Since the sheer magnitude of our human numbers makes such impingement inevitable, there can be neither diagnosis nor remedy which fails to take these personal interactions into account and give them prominent place.

The process of decision-making within families where people live together in voluntary association embrace these interactions because the decisions are based on predominant perceptions of mutual interest rather than predominant perceptions of competitive interests. They thus seem likely to be able to provide us some valuable clues in thinking about new decision rules centred on persons and personal processes."

Catherine Starrs and Gail Stewart, Images of the Family, April 1971.

- 18/ Marilyn Bender "Investment Returns vs. Social Role: A Concern", New York Times, April 4, 1971, explores some U.S. initiatives. In Canada, Dr. Morris Wayman, Department of Chemical Engineering and Applied Chemistry, University of Toronto, is exploring the inclusion of ecological considerations in industrial planning techniques.
- 19/ See Frederick Thayer, "Administrative Theory and Political Theory: Can We Close the Gap?", prepared for delivery at the 1971 National Conference on Public Administration, on the converging of trends in public administration and political theory, and Robert Hunter, The Enemies of Anarchy, McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, 1970, on the phenomenon of large scale integration which he believes is currently underway, transforming an aggressive society (civilization) into a meek society (post-civilization).
- 20/ Professor Forrester, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who has developed large scale computer based systems models for simulation analysis, makes the point that complex systems are counter-intuitive.
- 21/ See Willis W. Harman, "Alternative Futures and Habitability", a paper prepared for the National Symposium on Habitability of Environments, Los Angeles, California, May 1970. Dr. Harman speaks of the possibility of developing a science of subjective consciousness.



- 22/ It is not uncommon, for example, to find people in all organizations now who are prepared to "transcend" their institutional roles — to take special time and trouble, or even special risk, over issues which they regard as important and with respect to which they believe the policies of their institutions are inadequate to the times — are insufficiently "humane". This phenomenon suggests that those who believe they "govern" any organization will more and more find themselves in a situation which can be likened to "trying to herd a swarm of bees across the prairies on a bicycle" (with thanks to R.B.B.). Furthermore, it suggests that it may well be the rigid and mechanistic interpretations of the abstractions at the core of our present institutions which create the turbulence often seen around them.
- 22A/ Affluence appears to have played an ambiguous role — freeing time for reflection and providing access to resources, but also revealing itself to some as "empty" or "inadequate" in terms of human values.
- 23/ Stephen Clarkson (ed.), Visions 2020: Fifty Canadians in Search of a Future, M.G. Hurtig Ltd., Edmonton, 1970.
- 24/ Loren Eiseley, The Immense Journey, Random House, Inc., New York, 1957.
- 25/ Its arithmetic appears to be synergistic — ( $2 + 2 = 5$ ). See, for example, Abraham H. Maslow, "Synergy in the Society and in the Individual", Presidential Address to the New England Psychological Association, Boston, November 1963.
- 26/ John R. Platt, "The Two Faces of Perception", Main Currents in Modern Thought, Sept.-Oct., 1968, Vol. 25, No. 1.
- 27/ Paulo Friere, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Herder & Herder, New York, 1970.
- 28/ Peter L. Berger, The Precarious Vision, Doubleday & Co., Garden City, New York, 1961.
- 29/ Manfred Halpern, op. cit.

30/ Kurt Vonnegut, Cat's Cradle, Dell Publishing Co., New York, 1963, and other works.

31/ Philip Slater, The Pursuit of Loneliness, Saunders Press, Toronto, 1971.

31A/ Woodsworth, op. cit.

32/ "...At the present moment people are unusually expectant of a more fundamental diagnosis; more particularly ready to receive it; eager to try it out, if it should be even plausible. But apart from this contemporary mood, the ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else. Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist. Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back. I am sure that the power of vested interests is vastly exaggerated compared with the gradual encroachment of ideas. Not, indeed, immediately, but after a certain interval; for in the field of economic and political philosophy there are not many who are influenced by new theories after they are twenty-five or thirty years of age, so that the ideas which civil servants and politicians and even agitators apply to current events are not likely to be the newest. But soon or late, it is ideas, not vested interests, which are dangerous for good or evil."

J. M. Keynes, The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money, MacMillan and Co., Limited, London, 1951.

33/ Among other critics of the basic assumptions of economists are Vivian C. Walsh, "Towards a Radical Economics", paper presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Economics Association, St. John's, Newfoundland, June, 1971 (on the assumptions underlying microeconomics) and Melville J. Ulmer, The Welfare State: USA, An Exploration in and Beyond the New Economics, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1969 (on the assumptions underlying macroeconomics). See also Sir Geoffrey Vickers, "The Demands of a Mixed Economy", Wharton Quarterly, Spring, 1971, Vol. 5, No. 3.

- 34/ These terms have been used by such people as Hutchison; Toynbee, Boulding, and Hunter; and Eric Trist.

"Hence the most interesting development in our times, it seems to me, is not the discovery of the obvious physical facts, the facts of destruction or survival. It is the sudden, groping, grasping suspicion among ordinary men that many of the ideas on which they have always relied are probably wrong and must be changed.

In the rich nations like Canada, where men have time to think, and freedom to think about life as they please, that dawning awareness of old falacies and new necessities will have more effect on society than all the politicians, scientists and economists combined. It mocks alike the sacred assumptions of politics, (sic) the sham battles of politics, the accuracy of statistics. It contains more heresy, hope and explosive force than all the revolutionaries of Moscow and Peking put together."

Hutchison, "The Trick is to Beat the System", Ottawa Journal, July 27, 1971.

- 35/ The growing importance of the service component in personal consumption as income rises, as well as a growing appreciation that expenditures on consumer durables are probably best understood as generated by a demand for the flow of services they render, may also be interpreted as aspects of the shift in focus.
- 36/ The process of searching for and inventing tools appropriate to post-civilization is already well underway. An inventory of some of these tools is to be found in such sources as The Whole Earth Catalog — others may be found in poetry, fiction and drama, and along the fringes of established disciplines and professions. The importance of searching for and inventing new tools and re-searching among old seems to us to be very great.

In this connection, a review of the structure and functions of existing and proposed re-search institutes (such as the recently announced federal government proposal for an institute for public policy research) may be desirable in order to ensure that they have the capacity to be useful as the nature of our problems changes. For the most part though, it seems likely that research will no longer be a process which is recognized to occur only where it is labelled as such, but an activity in which everyone is involved as a matter of course.

### Section III

1/ We are indebted to Johan Galtung for the idea of using a simple two by two matrix. (Galtung used his matrix to classify societies as horizontal or vertical, individual or communal.) Johan Galtung, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, "Pluralism and the Future of Human Society", mimeo. And for the caption we are indebted to Robert Theobald who has spoken of knight's moves with respect to patterns of social change. The pattern of our own thinking as it has turned out, at this stage, can be represented in this form.

### Section IV

- 1/ This must be true of any analysis that is worth two hoots -- (as we say in the Ottawa valley).
- 2/ Our thanks for this and other insights to A.E. Kahn, Cornell University.



- 3/ Such a process of broad policy review within our institutions is particularly desirable at a time when many people are clearly reviewing their own criteria for decision-making.
- 4/ Our pursuit of a rising GNP is a case in point here. Too much that is important to human well-being is excluded from its definition and has been endangered in its pursuit. The present move to establish social goals and develop social indicators to assist in their pursuit has inherent in it the same dynamic effects that result from the application of too-specialized understandings. Not only do such understandings define the problems too narrowly, but they may lead to policy prescriptions which simply exacerbate the problems. This suggests that such problems as poverty and inflation, to take but two examples, are unlikely to yield to policies which do not take account of the fact that the problems themselves are the result of tensions between people which are created and reinforced by other and more powerful policies which are simultaneously pursued.

(See Stanley Gershman, letter to the editor, Toronto Daily Star, Oct. 5, 1971, on inflation).

Such a conclusion, were it to receive substantial concurrence, could set to rout the seriousness with which economics and other administrative and managerial sciences are pursued in our universities and research institutes by converting them from normative to expository disciplines. (Managers and administrators themselves, we suspect, have long recognized that their roles involve more art than science.)

- 5/ The educational system could well be looked at from this vantage point. It has developed into a costly system offering many small choices (e.g., courses, subject options) but little broad choice (e.g., moving between institutions, between courses, across age levels, subject matters, and fixed schedules in response to personal growth and convenience. The system now is probably less responsive overall than it was in the days of the one-room school house.

- 6/ We are indebted to Ray Affleck, Montreal, for some analogous insights into the process of architectural designing.

## Section V

- 1/ Rock music, student movements, Coca-cola advertisements, religious faiths, business corporations and revolutionary causes, among others, are increasingly indifferent to national boundaries.
- 2/ Martin Luther King, Jr., just before his death, appears to have come to this conclusion when he broadened his concern for civil rights to embrace the issue of the war in Vietnam, arguing that the former could not be resolved separately. Several staff members of the Senate Committee on Poverty in Canada resigned over the issue of the appropriate context in which to pursue the problem, arguing that the Committee's focus was too narrow.
- 3/ It is notable that John Rolfe, writing in the Globe and Mail (Sept. 24, 1971) on the Eighth Annual Review of the Economic Council of Canada, Design for Decision-making, had this to say:

"And to satisfy the growing aspirations of the general public and groups within it for a voice in policy and program formulation, the council urges these interests to upgrade their techniques for policy appraisal. This would widen the private-sector contribution to decision-making and serve as a countervailing force to the technocratic and centralizing influences otherwise inherent in such a decision-making process."

The academic community is reported to have responded enthusiastically to the Council's report.

- 4/ Bureau of Municipal Research, "Neighbourhood Participation in Local Government", Civic Affairs, January 1970. This study concludes that "the measure of success in (a neighbourhood group's)

ability to represent the interest of the community is its success in motivating the membership to participate on a continuing basis after the heat of the particular issue has died away."

## Section VI

- 1/ That specialized economic considerations have become more rather than less important is reflected in the rating of the communications industry as one of Canada's "growth industries" -- or so it was prior to the recent general break in the stock market. The degree to which media owners "have a vast and perhaps disproportionate say in how our society defines itself" was also noted in The Report of the Special Senate Committee on the Mass Media, (Queen's Printer, Ottawa, 1970).
- 2/ Marshall McLuhan: Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man, Signet Books, New York, 1964.
- 3/ Were the reverse to be true, and comprehensive understandings to form the value base of much of the media content while the receivers live by specialized understandings, then it appears far less likely that the media would contribute to social tension; specialized understandings can be embraced within comprehensive understandings, but not the other way around.
- 4/ Kenneth Boulding, "Communication of the Integrative Network", mimeo, 1970.
- 5/ Kiyo Izumi, "Some Thoughts About the Environment and Telecommunications, a talk presented at the Wired City Conference, Ottawa, June 25-27, 1970.
- 6/ This proposal was the subject of a paper by Gail Stewart given at the Wired City Conference, Ottawa, June 1970.
- 7/ The Canadian Computer/Communications Task Force, operating out of the federal Department of Communications, is currently considering the question of large-scale data banks which might

appropriately warrant federal support. Among possible candidates has been mentioned data banks designed for household use, along with legal data banks, medical data banks, etc.

"Under such rather broad terms the specific work of the Task Force is concerned with a 5 to 10 year forecast of the computer communications environment in Canada and its impact on society in the various fields of financial, legal, medical, library, resource, law enforcement, consumer services."

"The Canadian Computer/Communications Task Force", notes for a speech by H. J. von Baeyer, Director General of the CCCTF, before the Management Consulting Institute of the Federal Institute of Management, Ottawa, Feb. 18, 1971.

This was the basis on which the Consumers' Association of Canada approached the Task Force for funds with which to begin exploration of its proposal for a Community Information Network. (See Appendix).

- 8/ It has been suggested that the number of "transactions" between people on the same floor of a building tend to vary inversely with the square of the distance between their offices.

#### Appendix

- 1/ Community Information Centres: A Proposal for Canada in the Seventies, a study prepared for the Government of Canada by the Public Policy Concern, Queen's Printer, Ottawa, December 1970.
- 2/ A Community Information Network, the Consumers' Association of Canada, March 1971.



"What's the buzz?  
Tell me what's happening?  
...What's the buzz?  
Tell me what's happening?

- - - - -

We don't know for sure...

But we can stand on tiptoe  
in the crowd  
And stretch our necks  
and try to see  
And tell you what we think  
is going on  
To the whole horizon  
of our vision.

You may not believe  
or think we cast  
our eyes too far.

But you can always check  
by standing tiptoe  
for yourself  
Amending or enriching  
our interpretation  
with your own

And talking with us tell  
what we've misjudged  
or failed to see  
Or helped you see  
in different light  
in your view.

We owe thanks to Ian Stewart, at once our ablest  
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the C.O.G.P. staff. And to many others from  
and with whom we have learned and are learning.

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